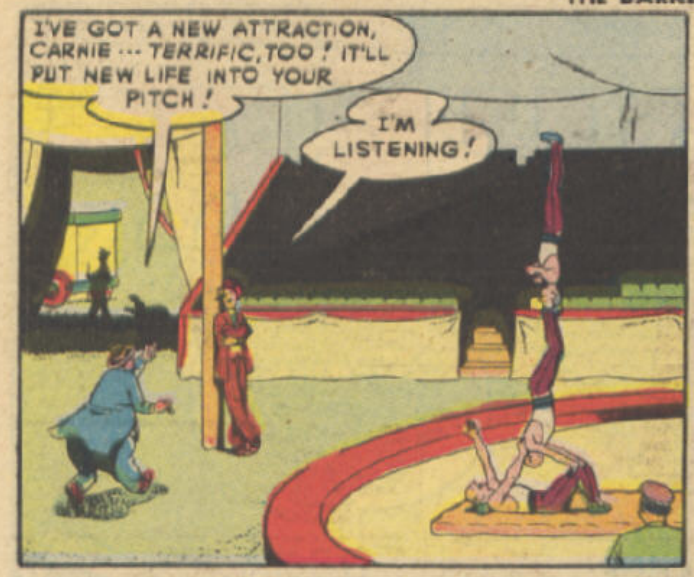
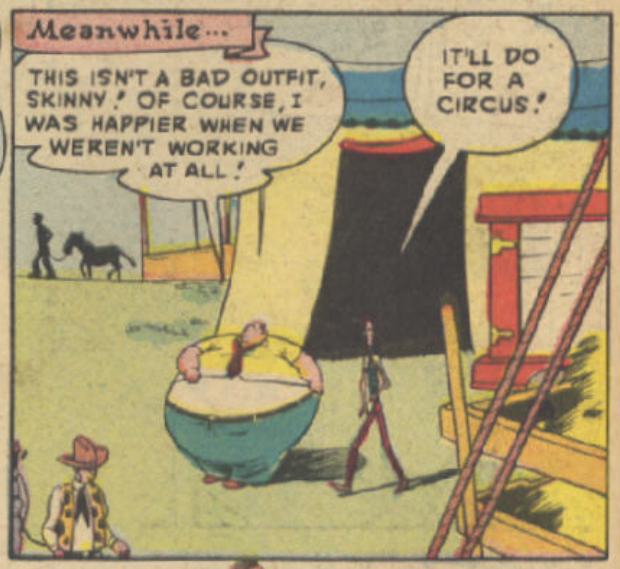
The BARKER
GRAWK! THOSE AREN'T HUMAN BONES... THEY'RE DAGGERS! HE'S TRYING TO STAB ME TO DEATH!
MRMPF! YOU'RE... MRMPF... LUCKY! IT'S BETTER THAN BEING... MRMPH... SMOTHERED!
By Klaus Nordling
Meet the JEALOUSY BROTHERS! One is fat... the other skinny... and both are hard on the nerves of CARNIE CALAHAN, the BARKER, and his pals of Colonel Lane's Mammoth Circus!

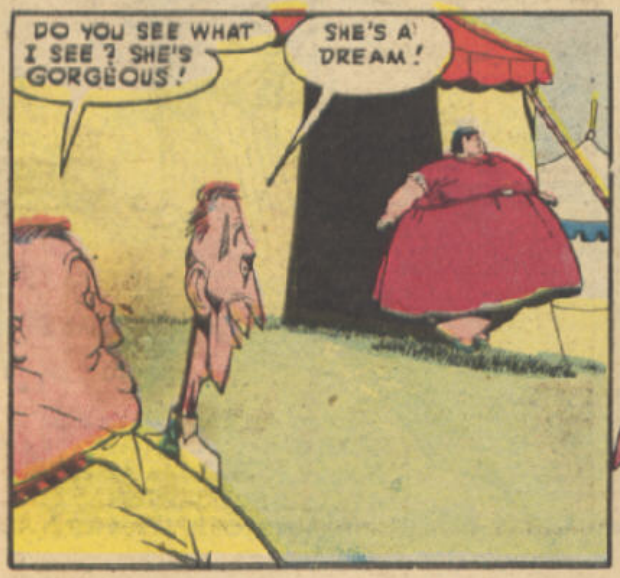
Supermouse
Startling Comics
Jetta
Mystery Comics
Fantastic Tales
Cosmo Cat
Startling Comics
Strange Mysteries
Daring Adventures
Startling Comics
Mystery Tales
Exciting Comics
Famous Funnies
Strange Worlds
Startling Comics
Jetta
Mystery Tales
Startling Comics
Barnyard Comics
Exciting Comics
Eerie
Exciting Comics
Casper Cat
Daring Adventures
WEBCOMIC UNIVERSE.COM

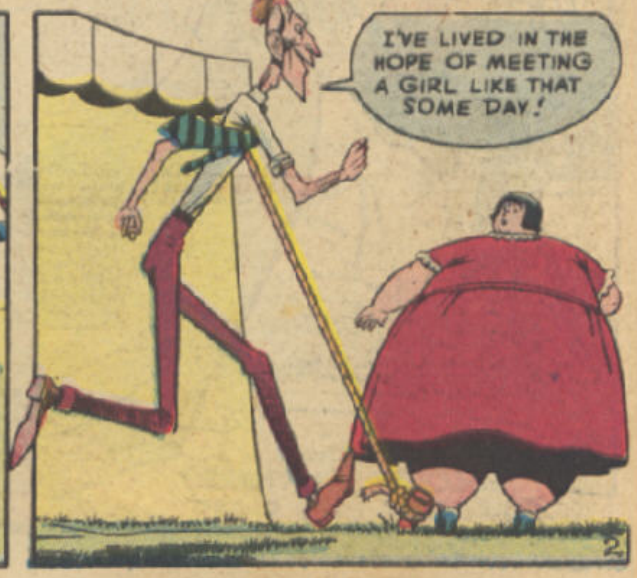

I'VE GOT A NEW ATTRACTION, CARNIE ... TERRIFIC, TOO! IT'LL PUT NEW LIFE INTO YOUR PITCH!
I'M LISTENING!

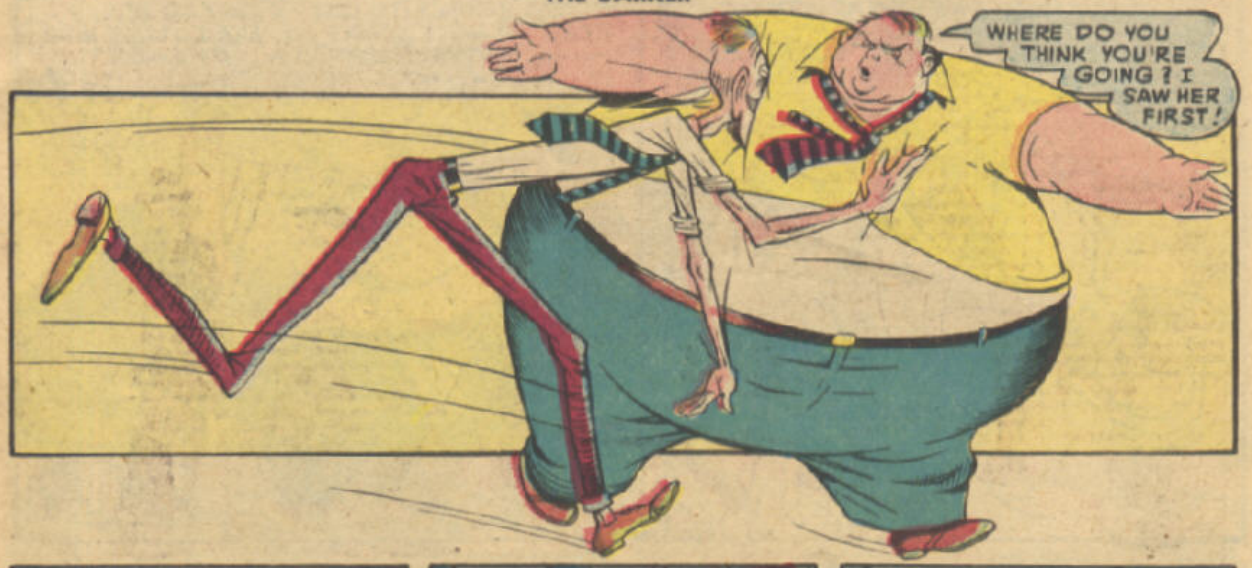
THEY'RE BROTHERS! ONE'S FAT ... THE OTHER'S SKINNY!
LOTS OF PEOPLE ARE FAT AND LOTS OF OTHERS ARE SKINNY!

AHH-.. NOT LIKE THESE! THE FAT ONE MAKES LENA LOOK UNDERNOURISHED! THE SKINNY ONE MAKES A TOOTHPICK LOOK LIKE A GIANT REDWOOD TREE! WAIT'LL YOU MEET THEM!
COLONEL, YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE A BARKER YOURSELF! BUT I'M WILLING TO BE CONVINCED!

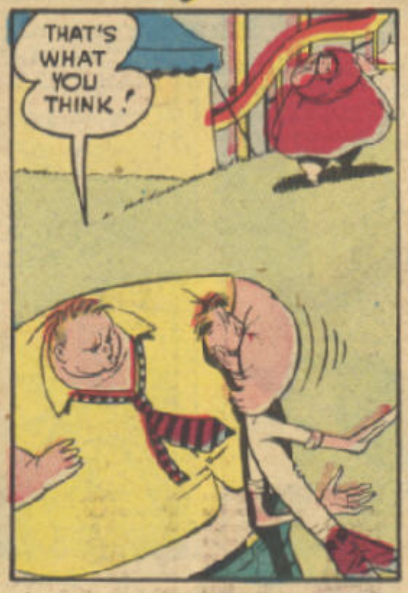

Meanwhile...
THIS ISN'T A BAD OUTFIT, SKINNY! OF COURSE, I WAS HAPPIER WHEN WE WEREN'T WORKING AT ALL!
IT'LL DO FOR A CIRCUS!

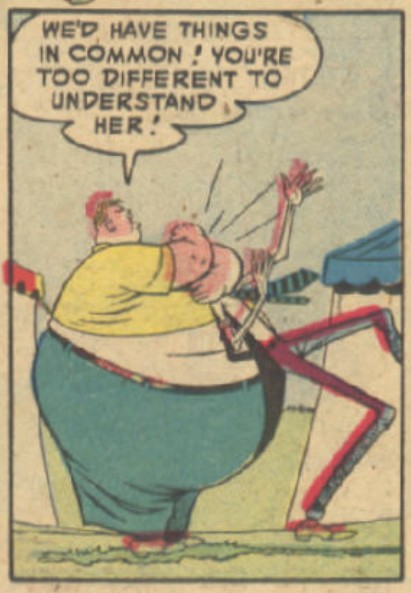

DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? SHE'S GORGEOUS!
SHE'S A DREAM!


I'VE LIVED IN THE HOPE OF MEETING A GIRL LIKE THAT SOME DAY!

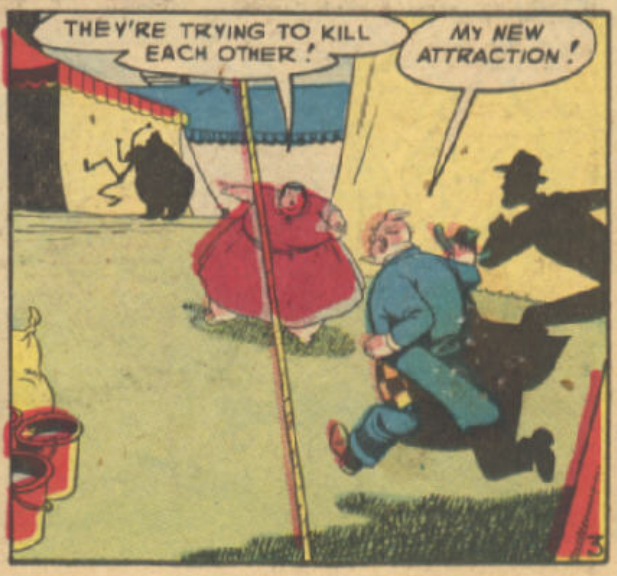

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING ? I SAW HER FIRST !

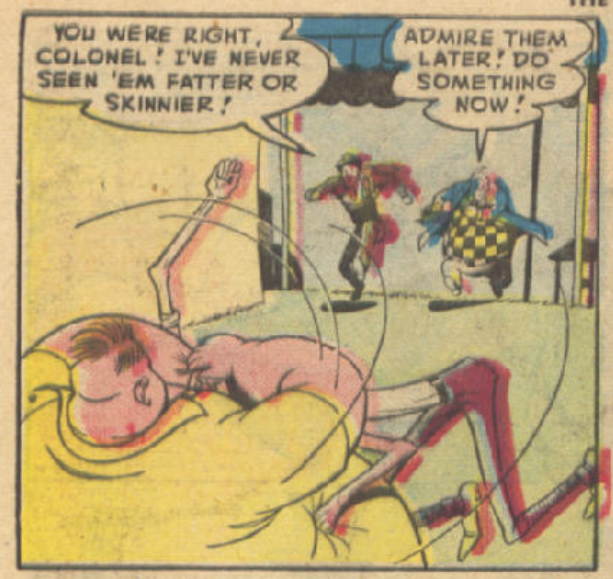
OUT OF MY WAY, FATSO ! SHE'LL NEVER GO FOR YOU ! YOU TWO ARE TOO MUCH ALIKE !

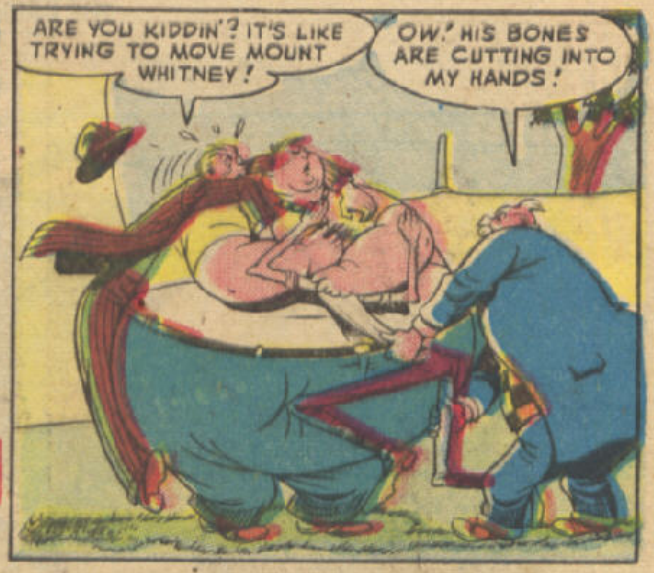

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK !

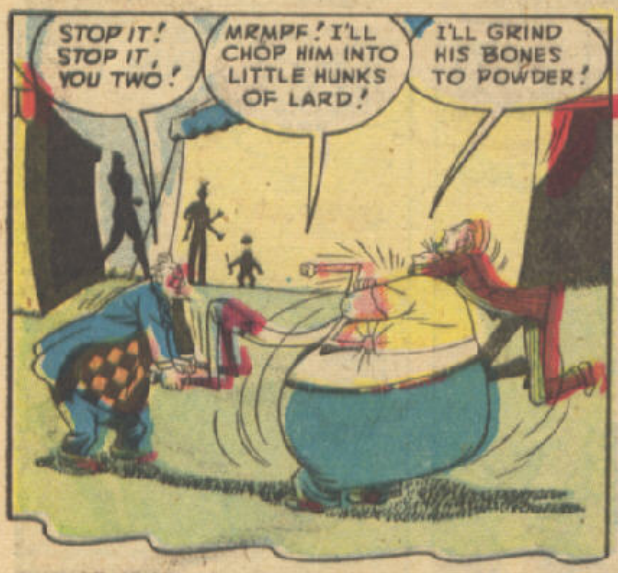

WE'D HAVE THINGS IN COMMON ! YOU'RE TOO DIFFERENT TO UNDERSTAND HER !

GOODNESS !

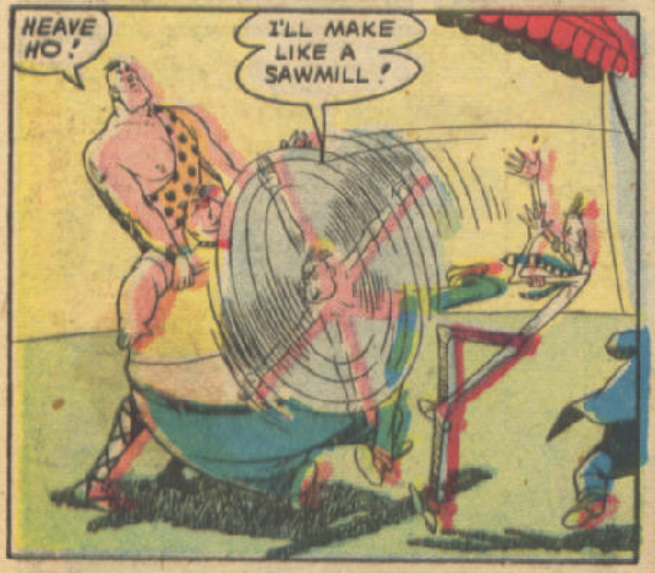

THEY'RE TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER !
MY NEW ATTRACTION !


YOU WERE RIGHT, COLONEL! I'VE NEVER SEEN 'EM FATTER OR SKINNIER!
ADMIRE THEM LATER! DO SOMETHING NOW!


ARE YOU KIDDIN'? IT'S LIKE TRYING TO MOVE MOUNT WHITNEY!
OW! HIS BONES ARE CUTTING INTO MY HANDS!

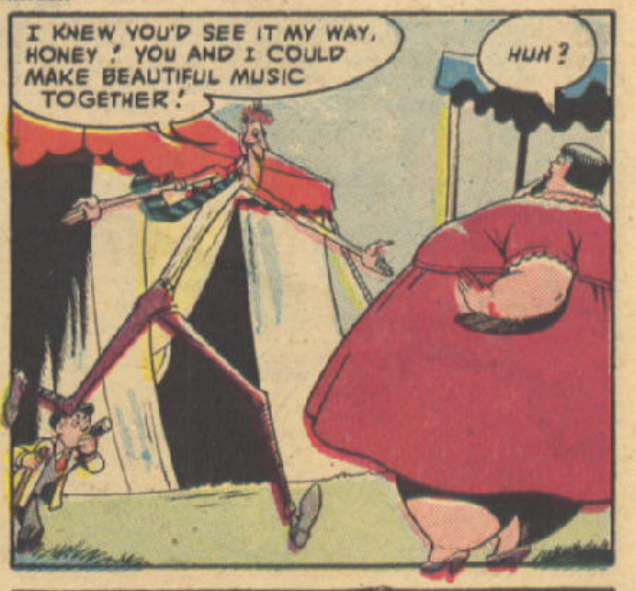

STOP IT! STOP IT, YOU TWO!
MRMPF! I'LL CHOP HIM INTO LITTLE HUNKS OF LARD!
I'LL GRIND HIS BONES TO POWDER!

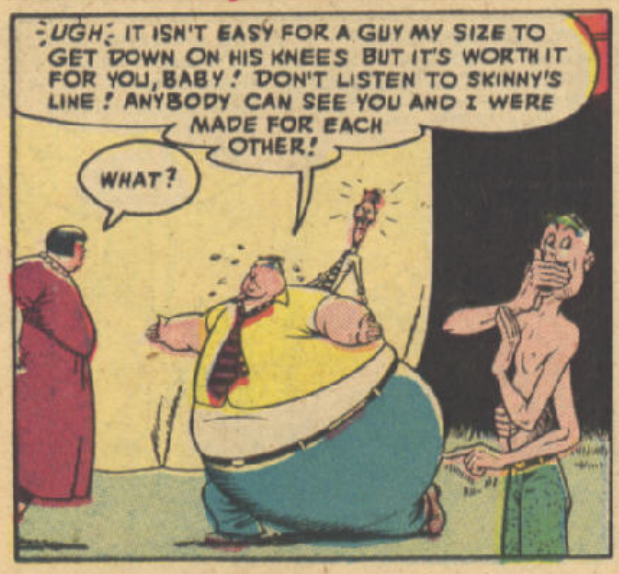
WHO ARE THEY? WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO DO?
THEY JUST TOLD YOU! LET'S HAVE SOME HELP!


HEAVE HO!
I'LL MAKE LIKE A SAWMILL!

NOW BEHAVE! I WANT YOU TO MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES!
WHO CARES ABOUT COLLEAGUES AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

FOLKS, MEET FATSO AND SKINNY ... THE DEKAVY BROTHERS!
BROTHERS? THAT'S NO WAY FOR BROTHERS TO TREAT EACH OTHER!


I KNEW YOU'D SEE IT MY WAY, HONEY! YOU AND I COULD MAKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER!
HUH?


UGH! IT ISN'T EASY FOR A GUY MY SIZE TO GET DOWN ON HIS KNEES BUT IT'S WORTH IT FOR YOU, BABY! DON'T LISTEN TO SKINNY'S LINE! ANYBODY CAN SEE YOU AND I WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER!
WHAT?

DON'T MIND HIM, ANGEL! HE JUST HASN'T LEARNED YET THAT OPPOSITES ATTRACT!

NIX! NOT AGAIN!
THE DEKAVY BROTHERS, EH? THE JEALOUSY BROTHERS WOULD BE MORE LIKE IT!

FAR BE IT FROM ME TO BOTHER YOU TWO ROMEOS WITH ANYTHING SO PROSAIC AS MY PITCH, BUT I'VE GOT TO GIVE IT IN FIVE MINUTES AND I WANT BOTH OF YOU ON THE PLATFORM WITH ME!

LENA, I ALWAYS KNEW YOU WERE A HEARTBREAKER!
BUT I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ... HONEST!

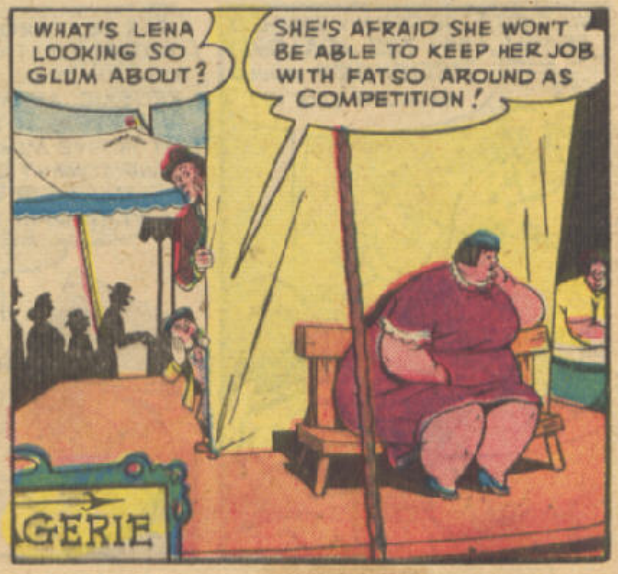
I KNOW SHE'LL GO FOR ME! I'D DIE FOR HER SIGH
SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL! SHE MUST BE MINE! SIGH

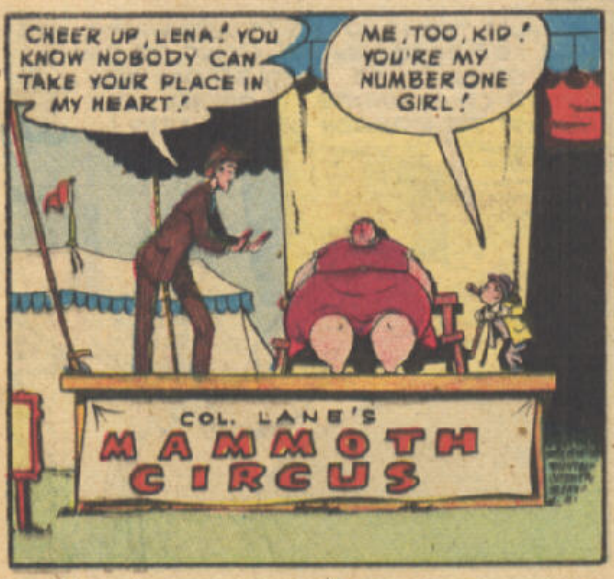
YES-SIREE ... HERE THEY ARE ... THE FATTEST MAN AND THE SKINNIEST MAN IN THE WORLD, AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THEY'RE BROTHERS! THAT'S WHAT I SAID, FOLKS ... BROTHERS ... SONS OF THE SAME PARENTS!

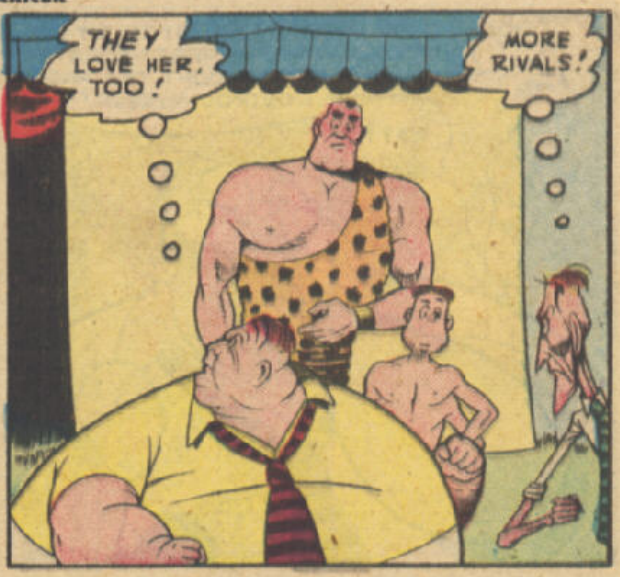
GOSH, I DIDN'T THINK A MAN COULD BE THAT SKINNY AND LIVE!
I'D HATE TO HAVE TO FEED A MAN AS HUGE AS THAT FAT ONE!

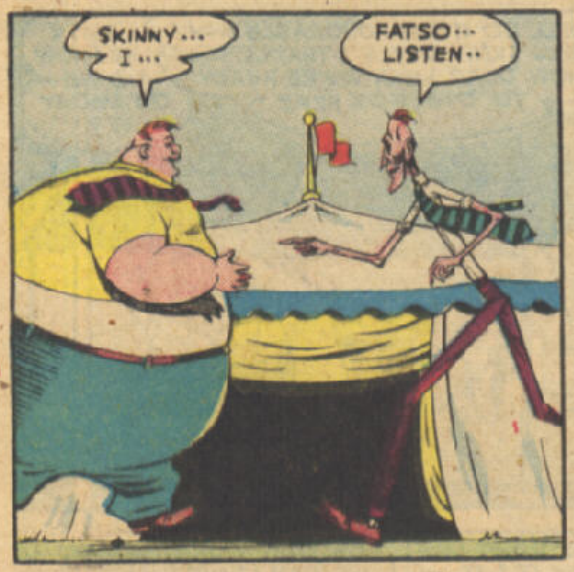
SAY, THEY'RE REALLY GOING OVER BIG! THE CROWD ISN'T EVEN GIVING US A TUMBLE!
YOU HAVE FAR LESS TO WORRY ABOUT THAN I HAVE! HOW CAN I HOLD A JOB IN THE SAME TENT WITH A GUY AS FAT AS THAT?

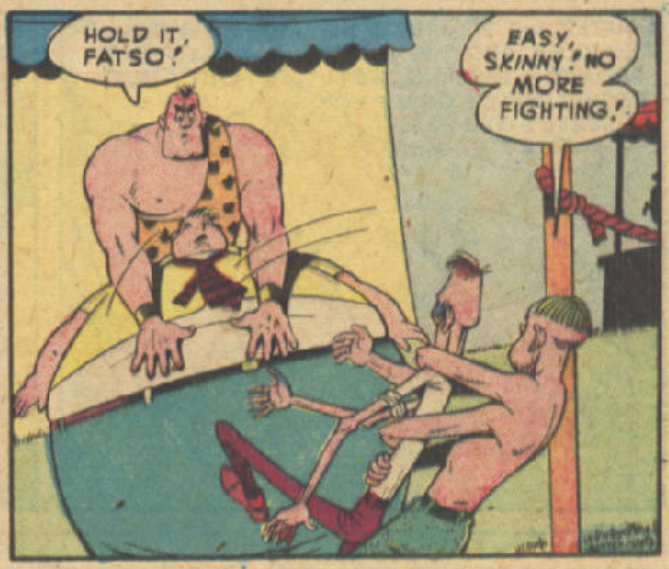
THE CROWD LOVES THEM! I KNEW IT!
TINY! SPUDO! DON'T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE JEALOUSY BROTHERS!


WHAT'S LENA LOOKING SO GLUM ABOUT?
SHE'S AFRAID SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP HER JOB WITH FATSO AROUND AS COMPETITION!
GERIE

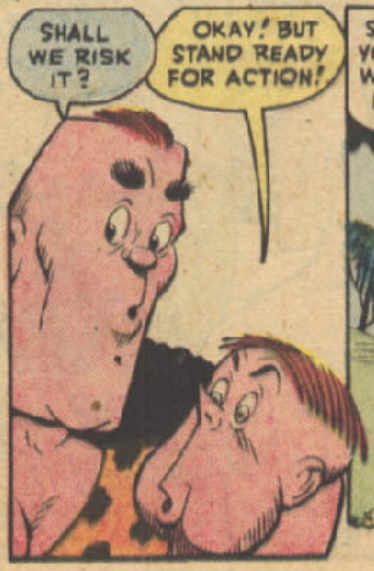

CHEER UP, LENA! YOU KNOW NOBODY CAN TAKE YOUR PLACE IN MY HEART!
ME, TOO, KID! YOU'RE MY NUMBER ONE GIRL!
COL. LANE'S
MAMMOTH
CIRCUS

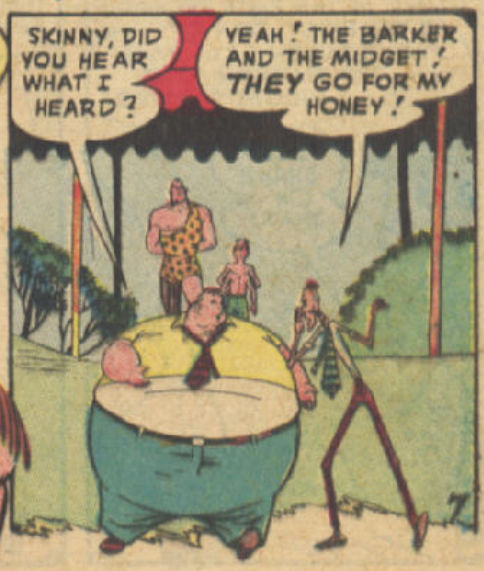

THEY LOVE HER, TOO!
MORE RIVALS!


SKINNY... I...
FATSO... LISTEN..

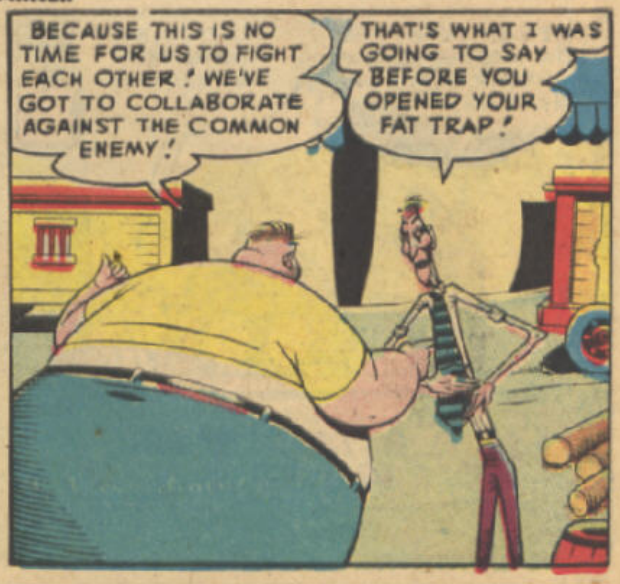

HOLD IT, FATSO!
EASY, SKINNY! NO MORE FIGHTING!

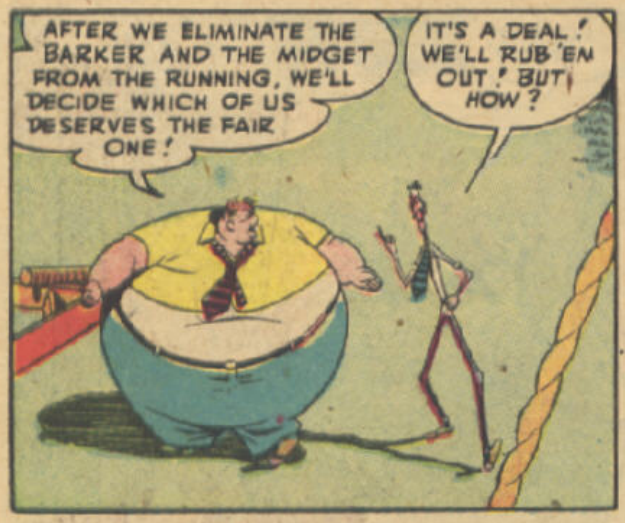
YOU'VE GOT ME WRONG! I JUST WANT TO TALK TO SKINNY!
I ONLY WANT TO HAVE A WORD WITH FATSO! CAN'T A GUY TALK TO HIS OWN BROTHER!

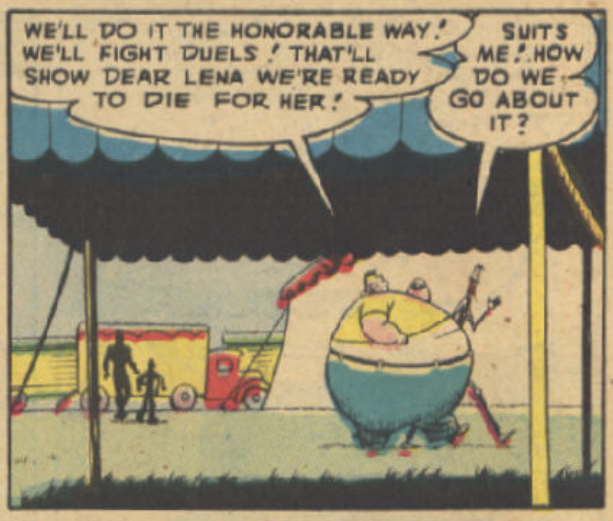

SHALL WE RISK IT?
OKAY! BUT STAND READY FOR ACTION!


SKINNY, DID YOU HEAR WHAT I HEARD?
YEAH! THE BARKER AND THE MIDGET! THEY GO FOR MY HONEY!

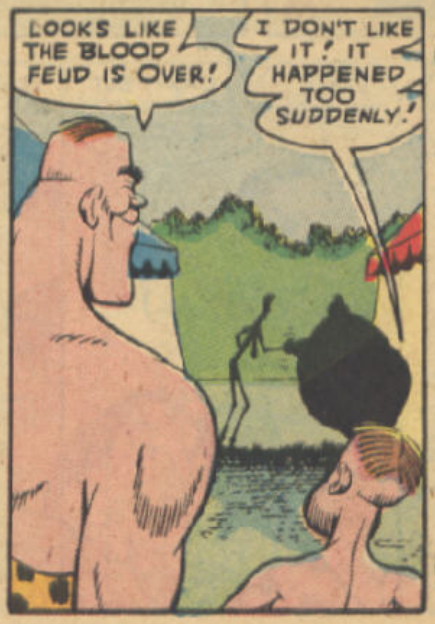
YOUR HONEY? WHY ... I OUGHT TO SIT ON YOU! ONE ... TWO ... THREE .. FOUR ... I MUST COUNT TEN AND CONTROL MYSELF!
WHY?


BECAUSE THIS IS NO TIME FOR US TO FIGHT EACH OTHER! WE'VE GOT TO COLLABORATE AGAINST THE COMMON ENEMY!
THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY BEFORE YOU OPENED YOUR FAT TRAP!

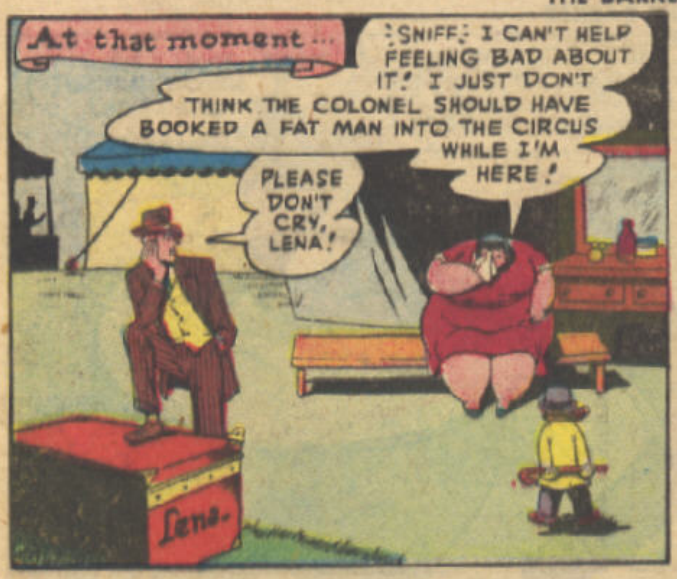

AFTER WE ELIMINATE THE BARKER AND THE MIDGET FROM THE RUNNING, WE'LL DECIDE WHICH OF US DESERVES THE FAIR ONE!
IT'S A DEAL! WE'LL RUB 'EM OUT! BUT HOW?


WE'LL DO IT THE HONORABLE WAY! WE'LL FIGHT DUELS! THAT'LL SHOW DEAR LENA WE'RE READY TO DIE FOR HER!
SUITS ME! HOW DO WE GO ABOUT IT?

THAT'S EASY! WE USE THE GLOVE IN THE FACE TECHNIQUE AT THE FIRST SIGN OF PROVOCATION! I'LL TAKE THE BARKER! THE MIDGET'S YOURS!
I'LL SHAKE ON THAT!

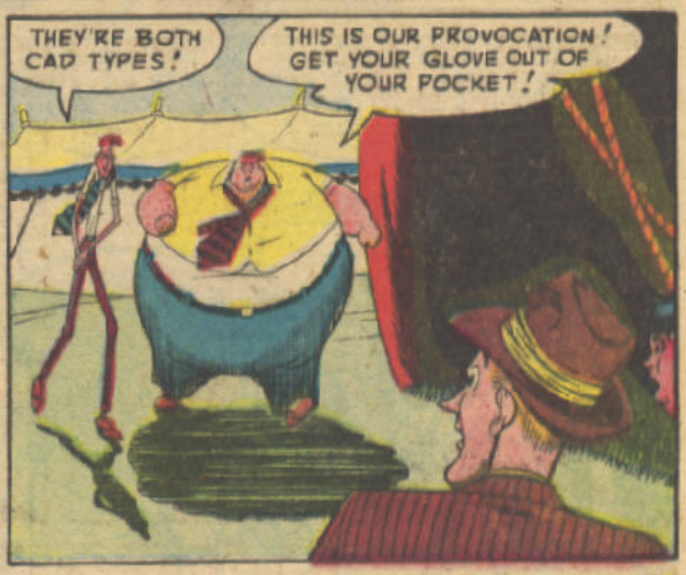

LOOKS LIKE THE BLOOD FEUD IS OVER!
I DON'T LIKE IT! IT HAPPENED TOO SUDDENLY!

OH, QUIT WORRYING! WE CAN LEAVE THEM ALONE NOW!
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT!

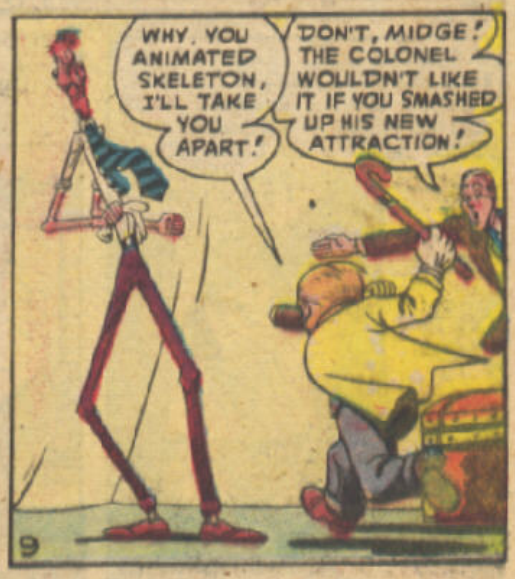

At that moment...
:SNIFF: I CAN'T HELP FEELING BAD ABOUT IT! I JUST DON'T THINK THE COLONEL SHOULD HAVE BOOKED A FAT MAN INTO THE CIRCUS WHILE I'M HERE!
PLEASE DON'T CRY, LENA!
Lena

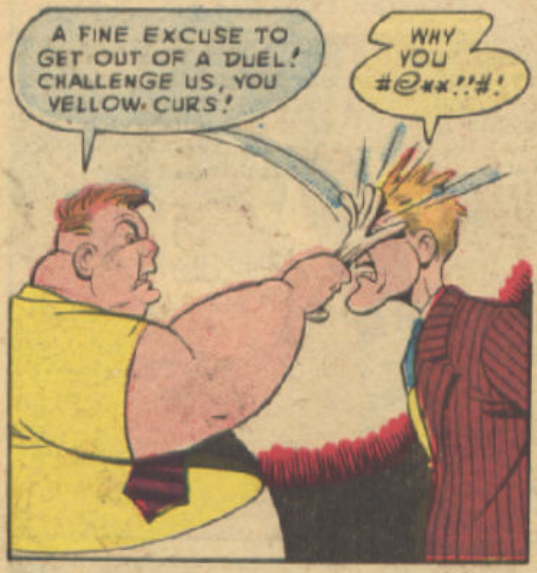
AND AFTER I'VE GIVEN HIM THE BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE!

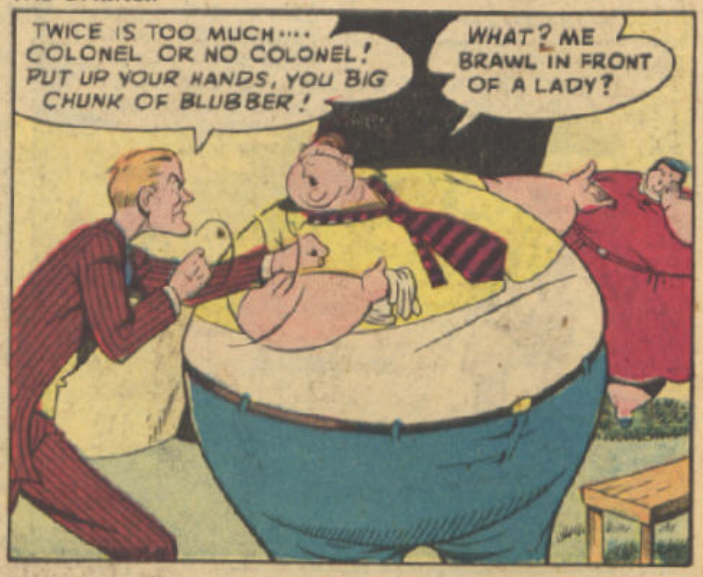
DID YOU HEAR THAT? SHE'S TALKING ABOUT THE MIDGET! HE AIN'T DOING RIGHT BY HER!
NO! SHE MEANS THE BARKER! HE LOOKS LIKE THE CAD TYPE!

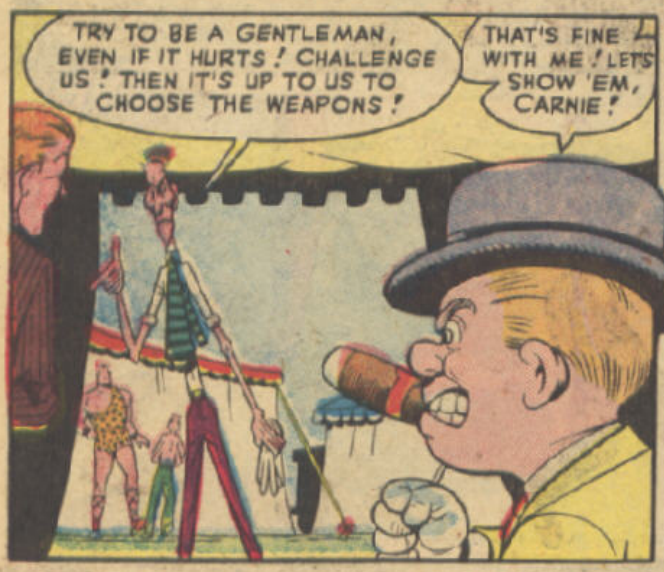

THEY'RE BOTH CAD TYPES!
THIS IS OUR PROVOCATION! GET YOUR GLOVE OUT OF YOUR POCKET!

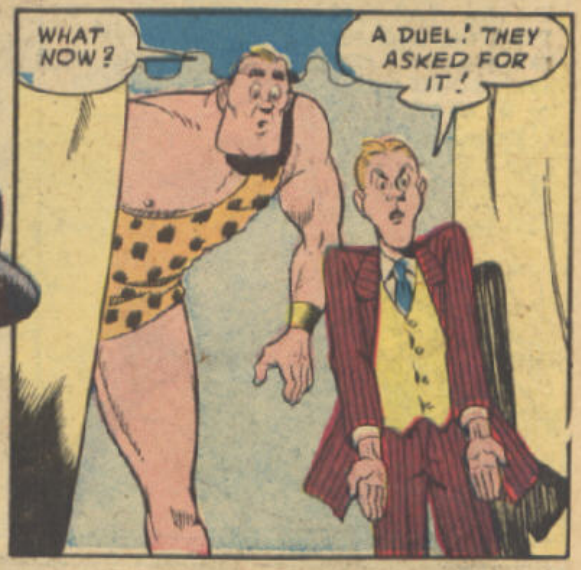
FIEND, YOU WILL DIE FOR BRINGING TEARS TO THE EYES OF THIS LOVELY CREATURE!
TAKE THAT!
BEAST, YOU'LL PAY DEARLY FOR THIS!
TAKE THAT!


WHY, YOU ANIMATED SKELETON, I'LL TAKE YOU APART!
DON'T, MIDGE! THE COLONEL WOULDN'T LIKE IT IF YOU SMASHED UP HIS NEW ATTRACTION!

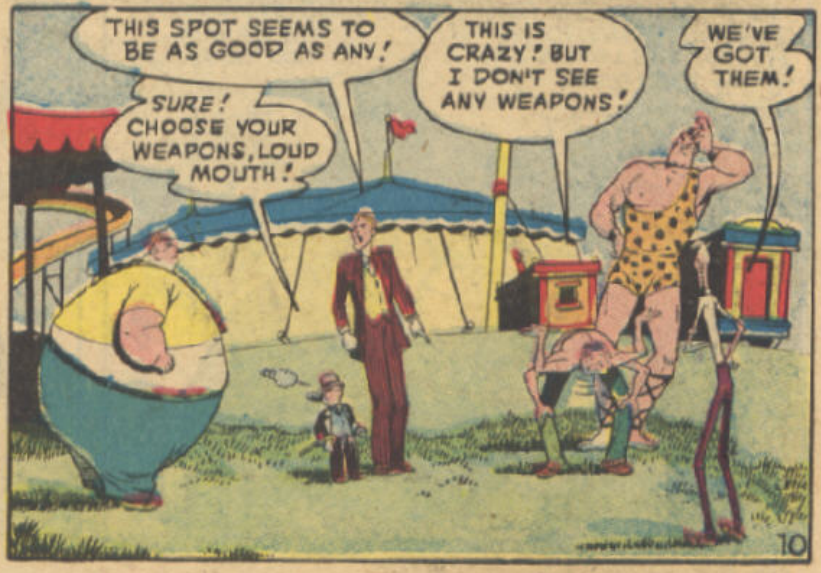

A FINE EXCUSE TO GET OUT OF A DUEL! CHALLENGE US, YOU YELLOW CURS!
WHY YOU #@**!!#!


TWICE IS TOO MUCH.... COLONEL OR NO COLONEL! PUT UP YOUR HANDS, YOU BIG CHUNK OF BLUBBER!
WHAT? ME BRAWL IN FRONT OF A LADY?


TRY TO BE A GENTLEMAN, EVEN IF IT HURTS! CHALLENGE US! THEN IT'S UP TO US TO CHOOSE THE WEAPONS!
THAT'S FINE WITH ME! LET'S SHOW 'EM, CARNIE!


WHAT NOW?
A DUEL! THEY ASKED FOR IT!

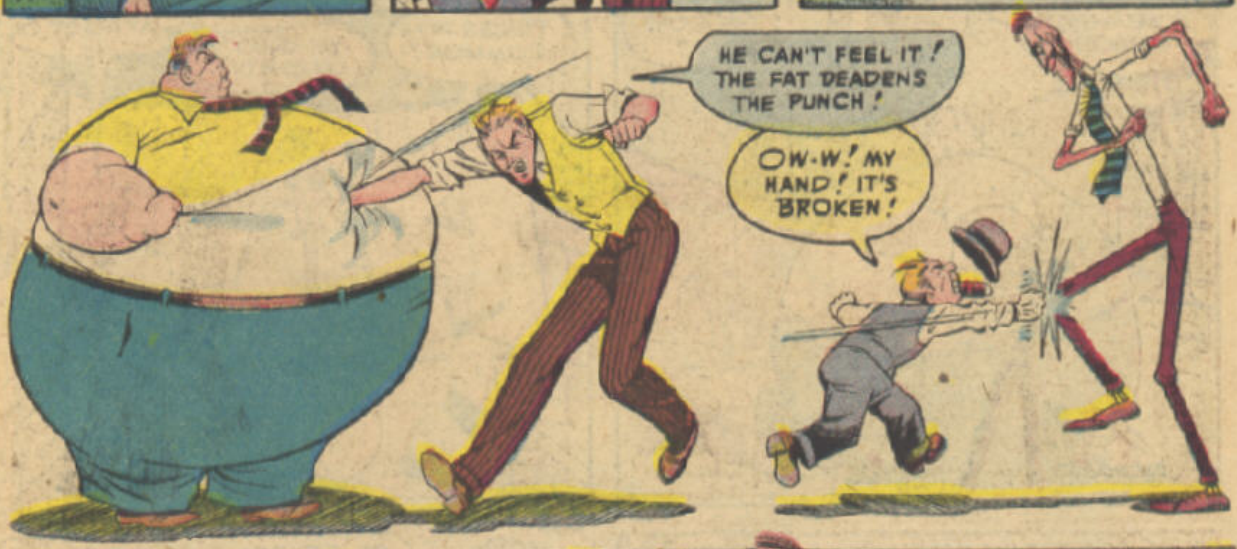
BUT, BOYS... THIS IS SILLY! I DON'T WANT YOU TO FIGHT OVER ME!
FEAR NOT, MY LOVE! I WILL AVENGE YOUR WRONGS! AND IF I DIE, YOU WILL KNOW HOW I HAVE LOVED YOU!

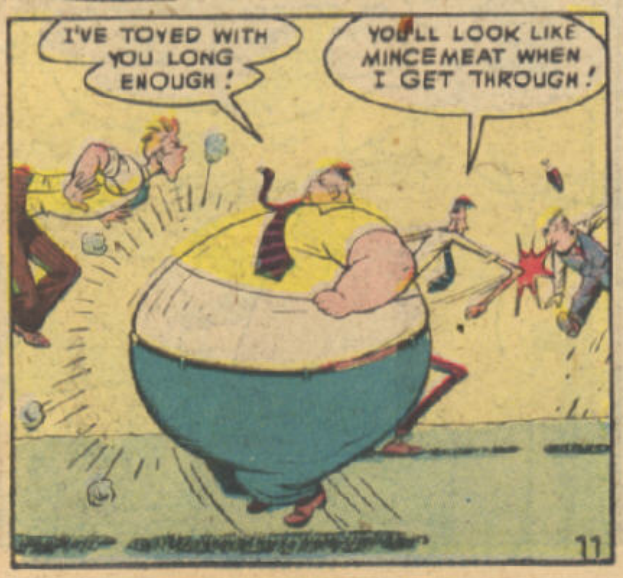

THIS SPOT SEEMS TO BE AS GOOD AS ANY!
SURE! CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS, LOUD MOUTH!
THIS IS CRAZY! BUT I DON'T SEE ANY WEAPONS!
WE'VE GOT THEM!

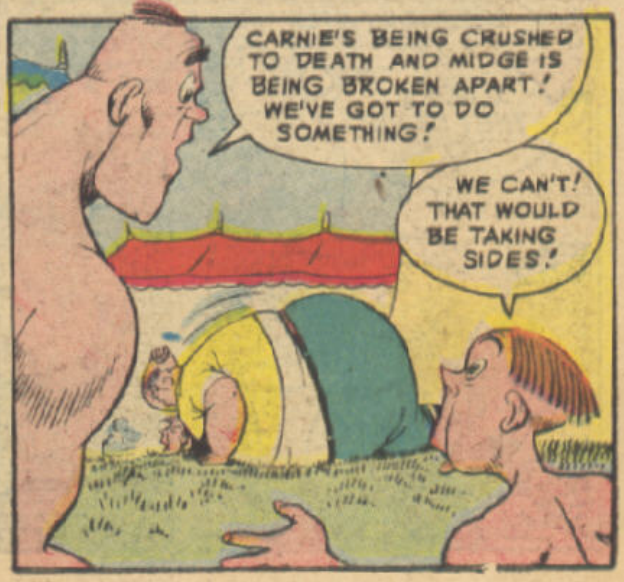
WHAT ARE THEY?
MINE'S FAT!
MINE'S BONES!

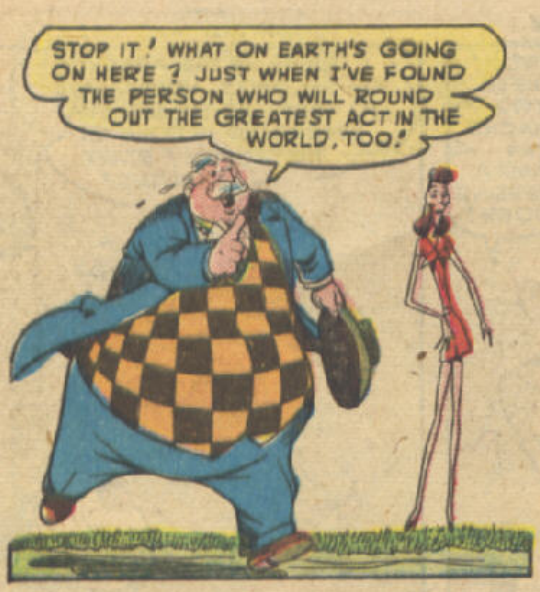
THE WINDBAGS! THEY HAD TO MAKE IT SOUND GOOD TO LENA! ALL THEY WANT IS A SIMPLE SLUGFEST, AFTER ALL!
GOOD! THESE TWO WHACKS CAN STAND A DRESSING DOWN!

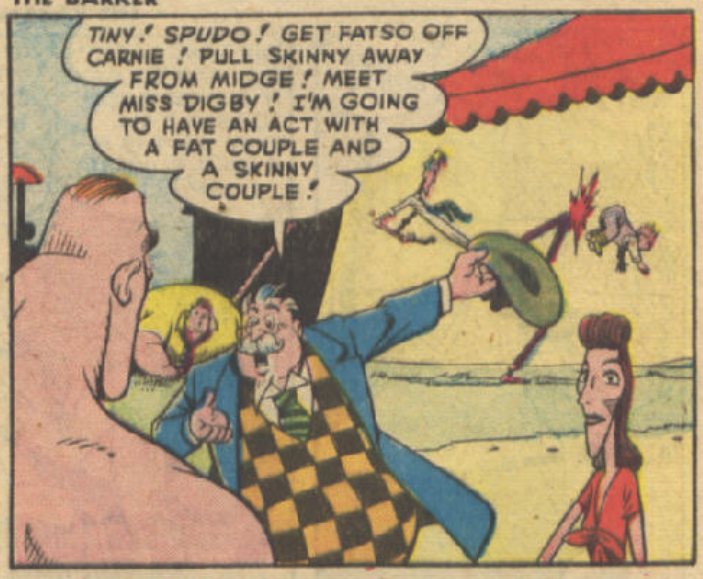
I GUESS, IN THE ABSENCE OF SECONDS, YOU'LL HAVE TO TRUST US TO SEE THAT EVERYTHING IS DONE ON THE SQUARE! START FIGHTING!

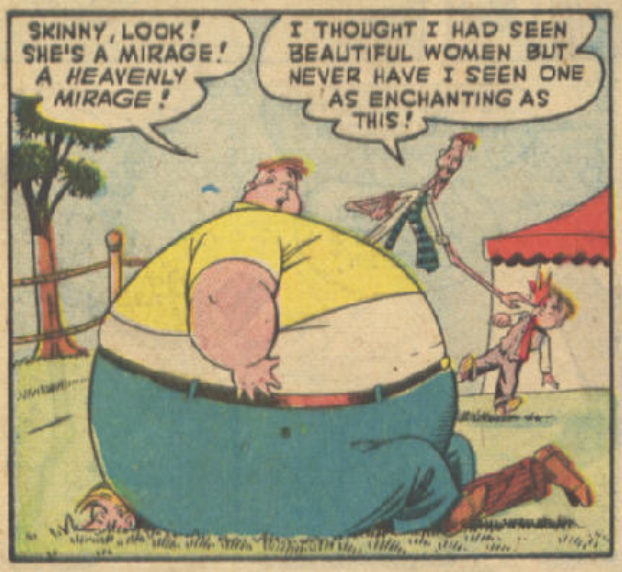

HE CAN'T FEEL IT! THE FAT DEADENS THE PUNCH!
OW-W! MY HAND! IT'S BROKEN!

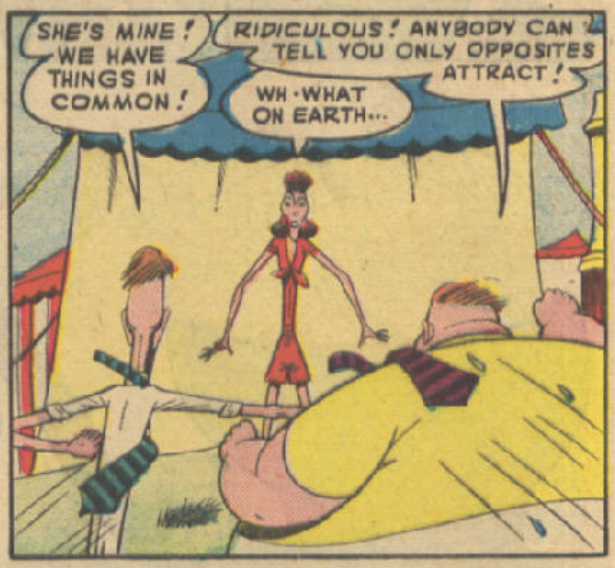

I'VE TOYED WITH YOU LONG ENOUGH!
YOU'LL LOOK LIKE MINCEMEAT WHEN I GET THROUGH!

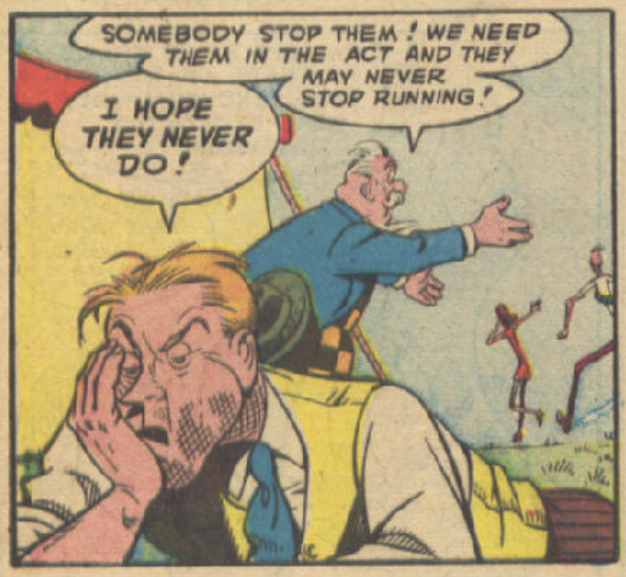

CARNIE'S BEING CRUSHED TO DEATH AND MIDGE IS BEING BROKEN APART! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!
WE CAN'T! THAT WOULD BE TAKING SIDES!


STOP IT! WHAT ON EARTH'S GOING ON HERE? JUST WHEN I'VE FOUND THE PERSON WHO WILL ROUND OUT THE GREATEST ACT IN THE WORLD, TOO!

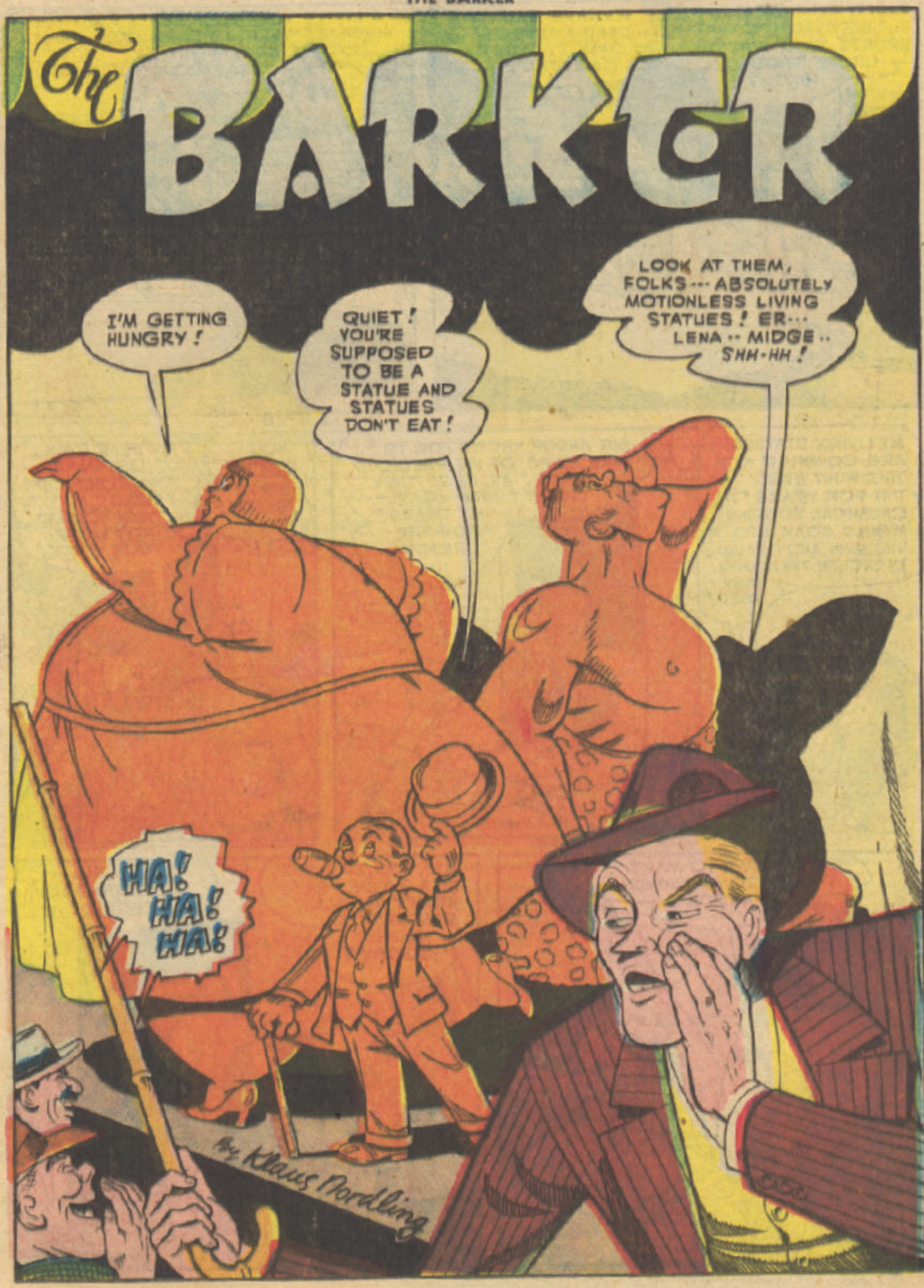

TINY! SPUDO! GET FATSO OFF CARNIE! PULL SKINNY AWAY FROM MIDGE! MEET MISS DIGBY! I'M GOING TO HAVE AN ACT WITH A FAT COUPLE AND A SKINNY COUPLE!

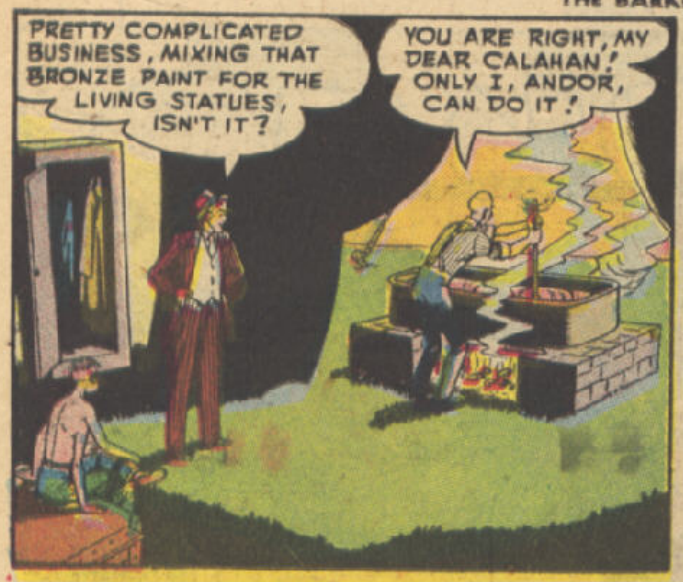

SKINNY, LOOK! SHE'S A MIRAGE! A HEAVENLY MIRAGE!
I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN BEAUTIFUL WOMEN BUT NEVER HAVE I SEEN ONE AS ENCHANTING AS THIS!


SHE'S MINE! WE HAVE THINGS IN COMMON!
RIDICULOUS! ANYBODY CAN TELL YOU ONLY OPPOSITES ATTRACT!
WH-WHAT ON EARTH...

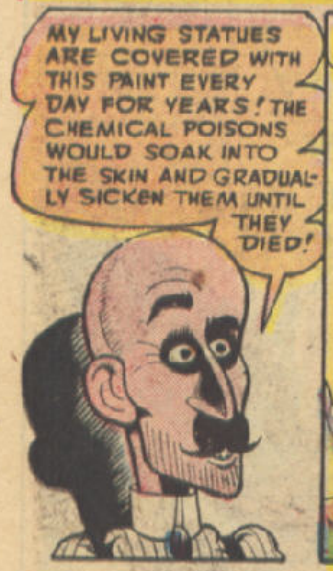

SOMEBODY STOP THEM! WE NEED THEM IN THE ACT AND THEY MAY NEVER STOP RUNNING!
I HOPE THEY NEVER DO!

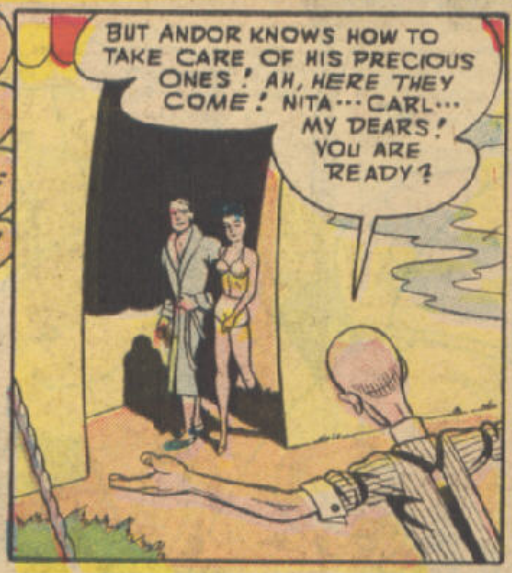
OF COURSE, I WASN'T REALLY INTERESTED IN EITHER OF THEM ... BUT I MUST SAY THEY CERTAINLY ARE FICKLE!
DAMES! BAH! HOW Y'GONNA FIGURE 'EM OUT?


The BARKER
I'M GETTING HUNGRY!
QUIET! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A STATUE AND STATUES DON'T EAT!
LOOK AT THEM, FOLKS--- ABSOLUTELY MOTIONLESS LIVING STATUES! ER--- LENA -- MIDGE -- SHH-HH!
HA! HA! HA!
By Klaus Nordling


PRETTY COMPLICATED BUSINESS, MIXING THAT BRONZE PAINT FOR THE LIVING STATUES, ISN'T IT?
YOU ARE RIGHT, MY DEAR CALAHAN! ONLY I, ANDOR, CAN DO IT!

A LITTLE TOO MUCH LEAD, A BIT TOO MUCH OF VARIOUS CHEMICALS WHICH I USE, MIGHT BE DISASTROUS!
WHY?


MY LIVING STATUES ARE COVERED WITH THIS PAINT EVERY DAY FOR YEARS! THE CHEMICAL POISONS WOULD SOAK INTO THE SKIN AND GRADUALLY SICKEN THEM UNTIL THEY DIED!

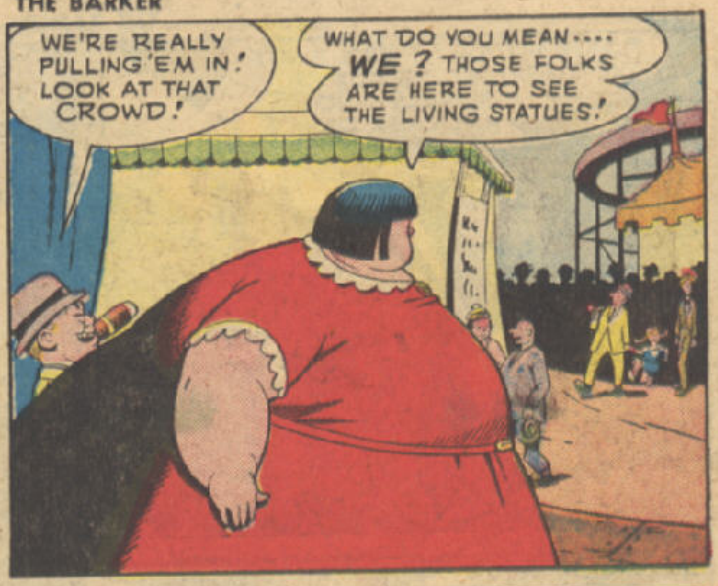

BUT ANDOR KNOWS HOW TO TAKE CARE OF HIS PRECIOUS ONES! AH, HERE THEY COME! NITA··· CARL··· MY DEARS! YOU ARE READY?

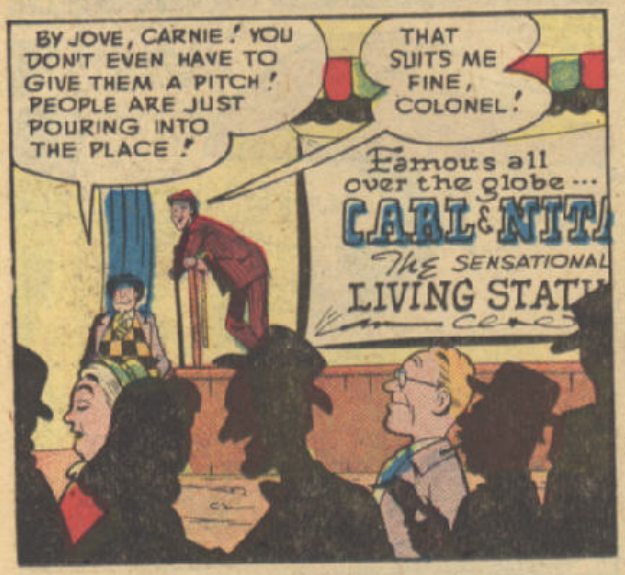
YOU KNOW WE'RE READY!
MY DEAR CARL, TO LISTEN TO YOUR TONE, OUR FRIENDS MIGHT THINK YOU DO NOT LOVE YOUR WORK!

DO WE HAVE TO MAKE POLITE CONVERSATION, ANDOR?

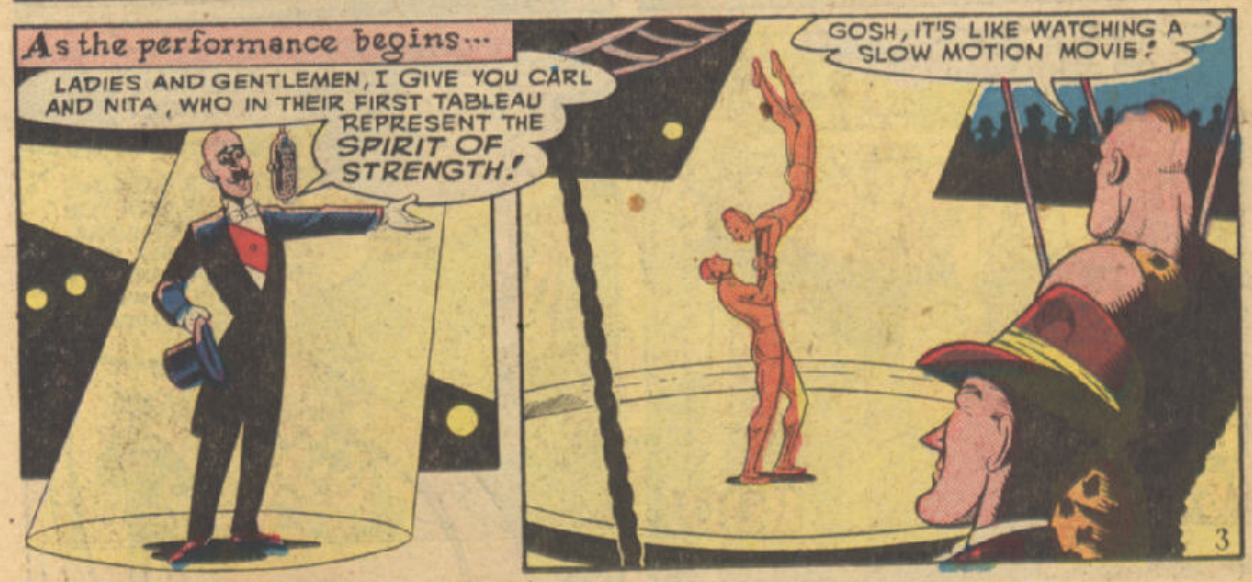
YOU, TOO, DARLING NITA? TSK, TSK! AREN'T WE ALL BUNDLES OF NERVES TODAY?
AHEM! WELL··· BE SEEING YOU PEOPLE!

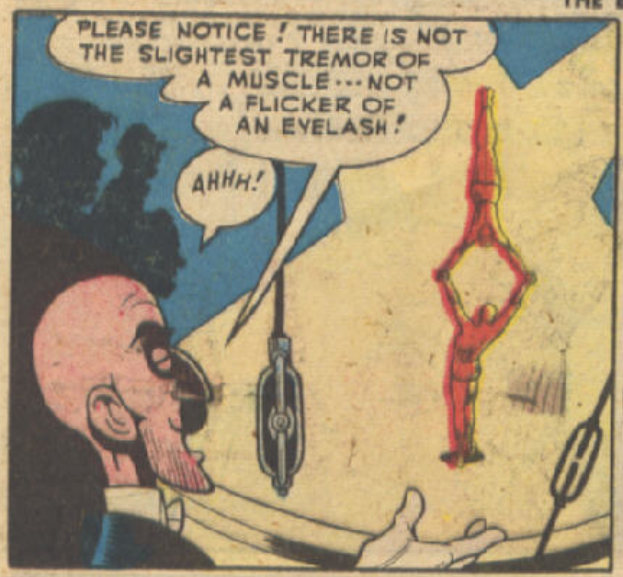
CARL AND NITA DON'T SEEM TO HAVE MUCH LOVE FOR THEIR MANAGER!
WHO LIKES MANAGERS, ANYWAY?

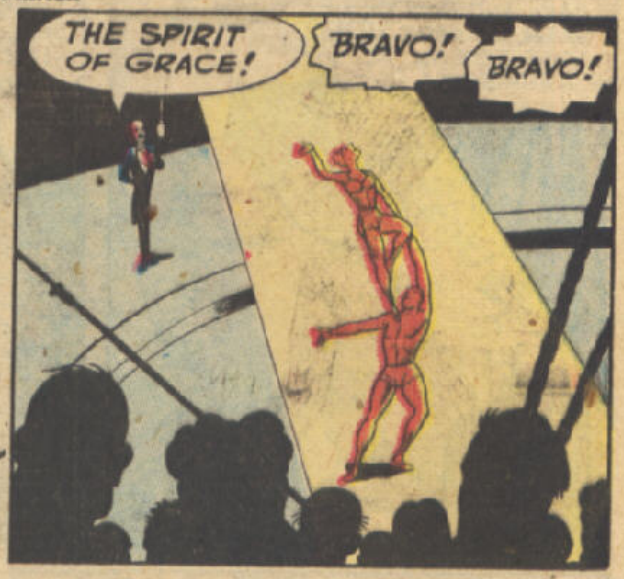

WE'RE REALLY PULLING 'EM IN! LOOK AT THAT CROWD!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN.... WE? THOSE FOLKS ARE HERE TO SEE THE LIVING STATUES!

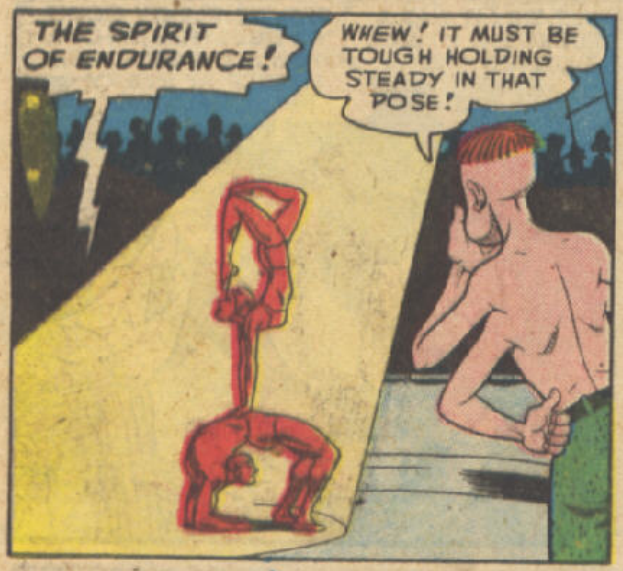

BY JOVE, CARNIE! YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO GIVE THEM A PITCH! PEOPLE ARE JUST POURING INTO THE PLACE!
THAT SUITS ME FINE, COLONEL!
Famous all over the globe...
CARL & NITA
The SENSATIONAL
LIVING STAT

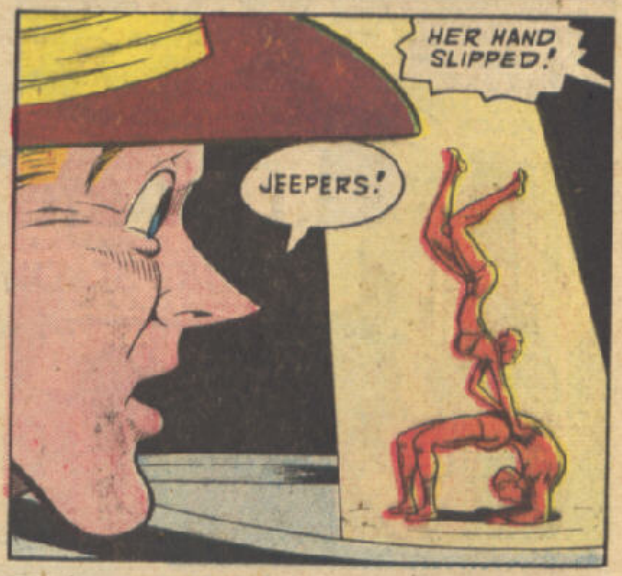
YES, SIR! IT WAS A LUCKY DAY WHEN I BOOKED THE LIVING STATUES!
THEY'RE PLENTY GOOD.. NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT! I WATCH THEM MYSELF AT EVERY PERFORMANCE!

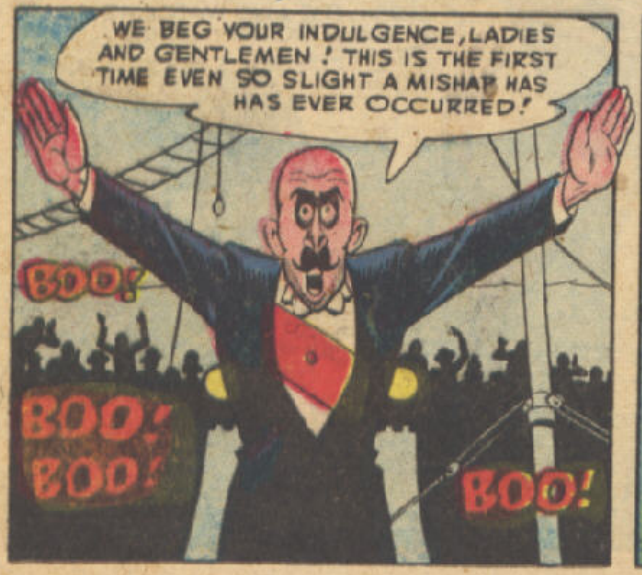

As the performance begins...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU CARL AND NITA, WHO IN THEIR FIRST TABLEAU REPRESENT THE SPIRIT OF STRENGTH!
GOSH, IT'S LIKE WATCHING A SLOW MOTION MOVIE!


PLEASE NOTICE! THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST TREMOR OF A MUSCLE ... NOT A FLICKER OF AN EYELASH!
AHHH!


THE SPIRIT OF GRACE!
BRAVO!
BRAVO!

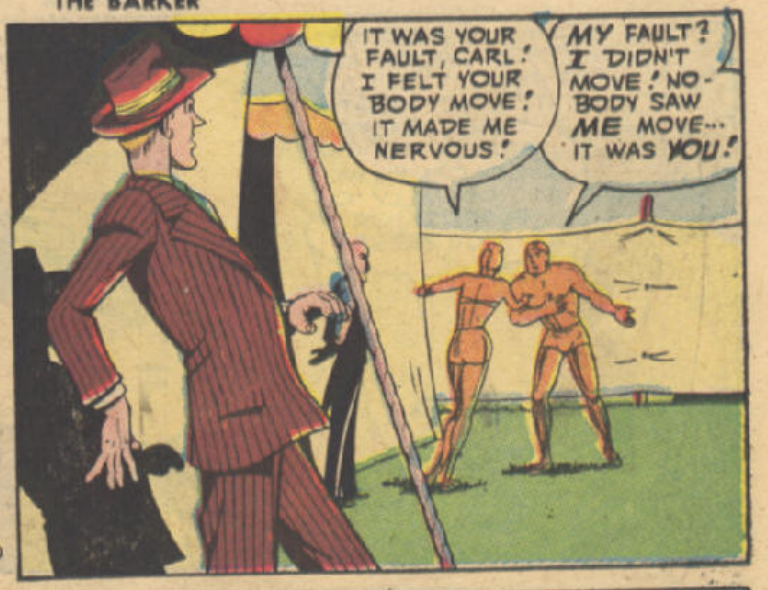

THE SPIRIT OF ENDURANCE!
WHEW! IT MUST BE TOUGH HOLDING STEADY IN THAT POSE!


HER HAND SLIPPED!
JEEPERS!


WE BEG YOUR INDULGENCE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THIS IS THE FIRST TIME EVEN SO SLIGHT A MISHAP HAS HAS EVER OCCURRED!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!

BOO!
BOO!
WHY DON'TCHA GO HOME AND PRACTICE?
THAT'S A CIRCUS AUDIENCE FOR YOU! ONE SIGN OF WEAKNESS, AND THEY TURN AGAINST A PERFORMER AS IF HE WERE A CRIMINAL!

I'LL FIND OUT HOW IT HAPPENED!


IT WAS YOUR FAULT, CARL! I FELT YOUR BODY MOVE! IT MADE ME NERVOUS!
MY FAULT? I DIDN'T MOVE! NOBODY SAW ME MOVE... IT WAS YOU!

STOP IT! STOP IT! YOU BLAME ME FOR EVERYTHING!
I'M NOT BLAMING YOU, NITA... IT WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN, SOONER OR LATER!

OH, CARL, I'M SORRY! WE'RE BOTH JUMPY!
WELL... THAT STORM BLEW OVER IN A HURRY!

JUST A DOMESTIC SPAT, CARNIE! THEY'RE MARRIED, YOU KNOW!
AH, CALAHAN! JUST IN TIME TO WITNESS THE GRAND RECONCILIATION!

SOMETIMES I THINK DEAR CARL AND NITA DO NOT LOVE EACH OTHER AT ALL ANYMORE!
THEY SEEM TO BE DOING ALL RIGHT!

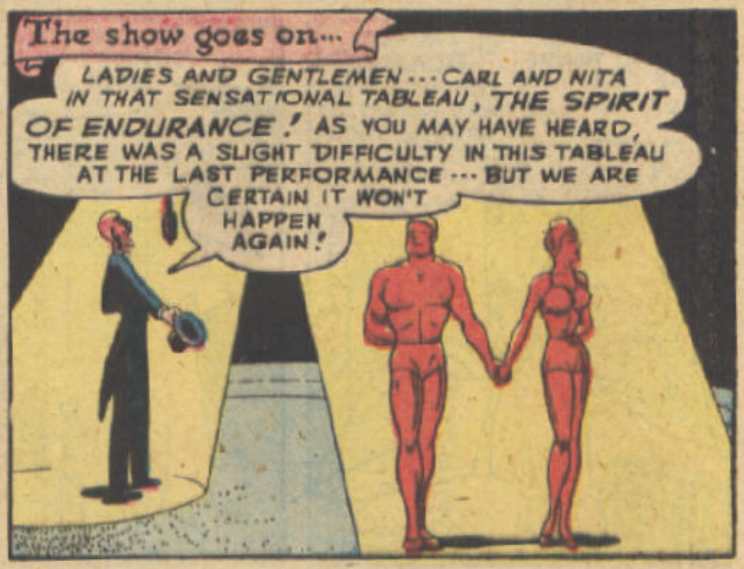
THAT WAS A VERY TOUCHING ACT YOU PUT ON FOR CALAHAN'S BENEFIT, BUT I'M NOT IMPRESSED!
YOU'RE A BEAST, ANDOR... A BEAST!

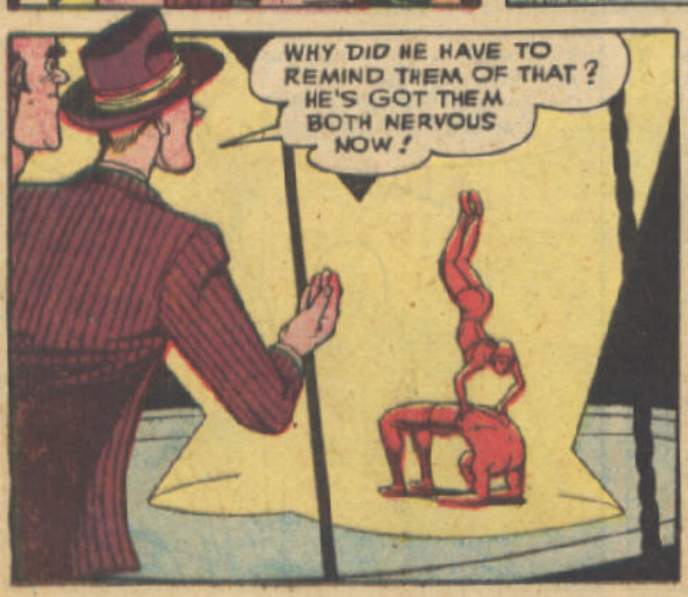
THERE'S TROUBLE BREWING AMONG THOSE THREE AND I DON'T LIKE IT!
AW, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! IT'S A SAFE ACT--- NOT LIKE THE HIGH WIRE, WHERE A MAN CAN KNOCK OFF HIS WIFE ACCIDENTALLY ON PURPOSE, OR VICE VERSA!

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT!

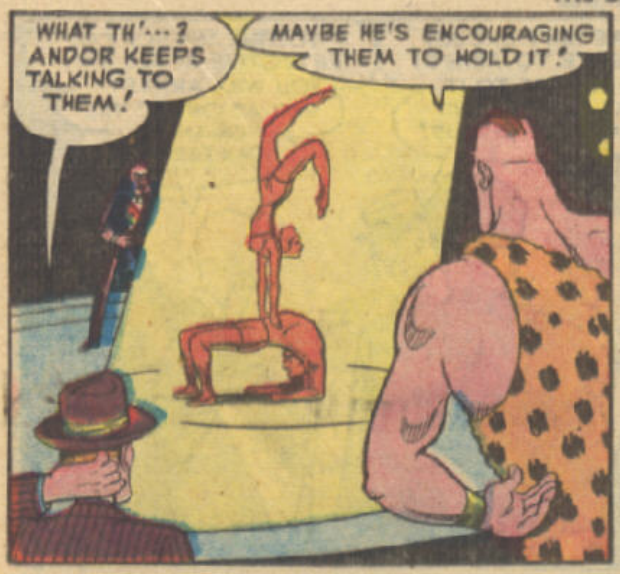
Before the next performance..
AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, FOLKS, THAT MOST SENSATIONAL ACT IN THE WORLD ... THE LIVING STATUES! SO STEP UP AND BUY YOUR TICKETS!

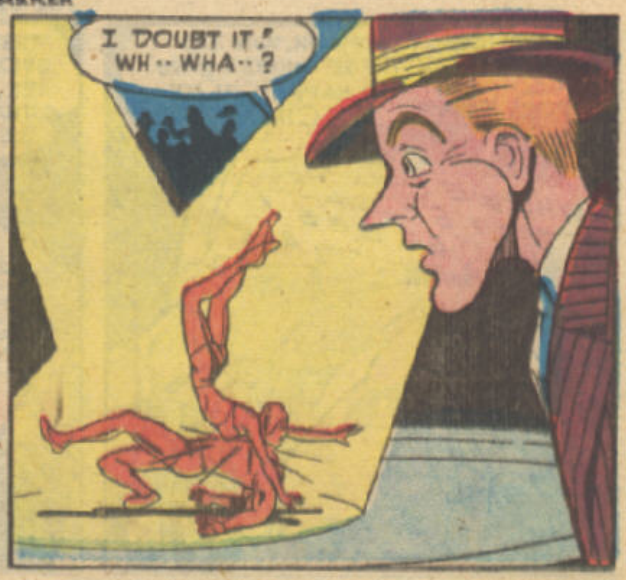
WELL, I HAD TO COAX THEM A BIT THIS TIME, BUT IT'S STILL A GOOD CROWD!
IT'LL DO!

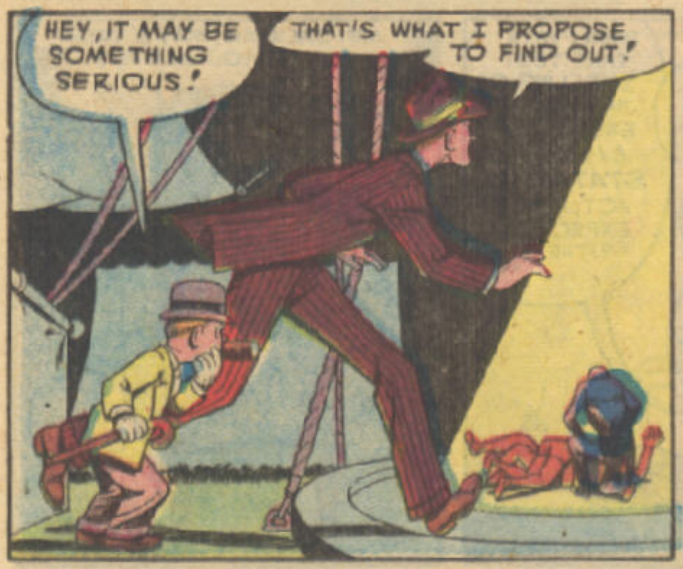

The show goes on...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ... CARL AND NITA IN THAT SENSATIONAL TABLEAU, THE SPIRIT OF ENDURANCE! AS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, THERE WAS A SLIGHT DIFFICULTY IN THIS TABLEAU AT THE LAST PERFORMANCE ... BUT WE ARE CERTAIN IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!


WHY DID HE HAVE TO REMIND THEM OF THAT? HE'S GOT THEM BOTH NERVOUS NOW!

THEY'RE HOLDING IT THIS TIME, ALL RIGHT!
BRAVO!


WHAT TH'...? ANDOR KEEPS TALKING TO THEM!
MAYBE HE'S ENCOURAGING THEM TO HOLD IT!


I DOUBT IT! WH-WHA-?


HEY, IT MAY BE SOMETHING SERIOUS!
THAT'S WHAT I PROPOSE TO FIND OUT!

IDIOT! YOU BROKE HIS NECK WITH YOUR CLUMSINESS!
NO! NO!

HE'S DEAD!
NATURALLY! HER FULL WEIGHT CAME DOWN ON HIM AND SNAPPED HIS NECK!

OH, CARL... CARL!
YOU HEARD THEM QUARREL! SHE THREATENED TO KILL HIM MANY TIMES! SHE KNEW SHE COULD DO IT IN THIS TABLEAU AND MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT!

DID YOU HEAR WHAT HE SAID? SOMEBODY OUGHT TO CALL A COP!
I'LL DO IT!

A POLICE SIREN!
WHY--OH, WHY DO THESE THINGS HAVE TO HAPPEN IN MY CIRCUS?
WHEEEE E EEEEEE EEE

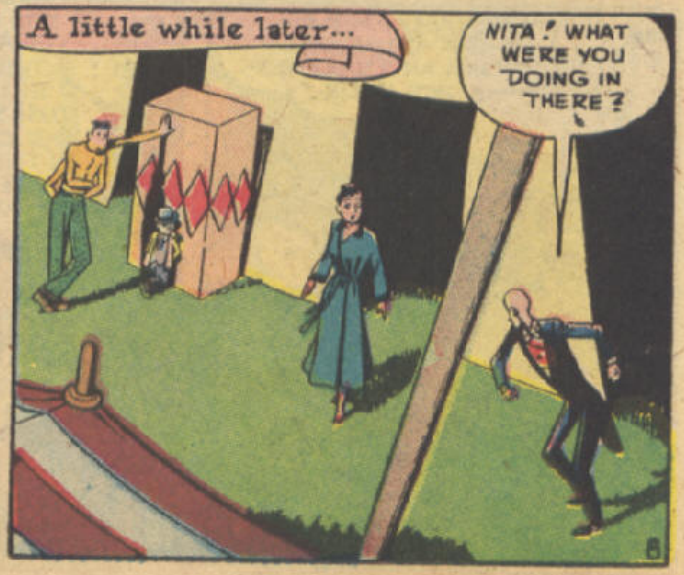
THERE ISN'T ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO ARREST HER, BUT SEE TO IT THAT SHE DOESN'T LEAVE THE CIRCUS!
IF YOU'RE ANY SORT OF DETECTIVE AT ALL, SIR, YOU WILL ARREST HER AT ONCE! THE WOMAN IS DANGEROUS!

NOBODY ASKED YOU, BUD!

Later...
THE COLONEL IS ABOUT TO BLOW HIS TOP, CARNIE! HE DOESN'T EXPECT EVEN A STRAY CAT TO SHOW UP TOMORROW!
HMM! WITH THAT TENT SMELLING OF JINX AND THE END OF THE LIVING STATUES ACT, I DON'T EXPECT ONE, EITHER!

MR. CALAHAN, MAY I TALK TO YOU ALONE?
I WAS JUST LEAVING!

WHAT'S COOKING? I SAW NITA GO IN TO TALK TO CARNIE!
HOW WOULD I KNOW?


A little while later...
NITA! WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THERE?

ANSWER ME!
SHE WAS TALKING TO CARNIE CALAHAN, BIG NOISE! LET HER GO!

SHUT UP, YOU LITTLE WORM! HOW DARE YOU TALK TO ME THAT WAY?
LET HER GO!

YOU HARD OF HEARING?

YOU LOST NO TIME IN MAKING A PLAY FOR CALAHAN! CAN'T EVEN WAIT UNTIL YOUR HUSBAND IS BURIED, CAN YOU?
WHO SAVED ME THE TROUBLE OF CLIPPING THIS NASTY CHARACTER?

I DID IT WITH MY OWN LITTLE FISTS, TEACHER!
YOU MAY GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS, SPUDO! HEY, TINY!

TINY, YOU'RE GOING TO DO THE LIVING STATUES ACT WITH NITA TOMORROW! BETTER START PRACTICING FREEZING YOUR MUSCLES!
WHO? ME?
WHAT? WHAT'S ALL THIS, CARNIE?

NITA'S A REAL, OLD-FASHIONED TROUPER! SHE DOESN'T SEE WHY THE ACT SHOULDN'T CONTINUE!
SPLENDID! SPLENDID! PERHAPS THINGS AREN'T AS BLACK AS I THOUGHT THEY WERE!

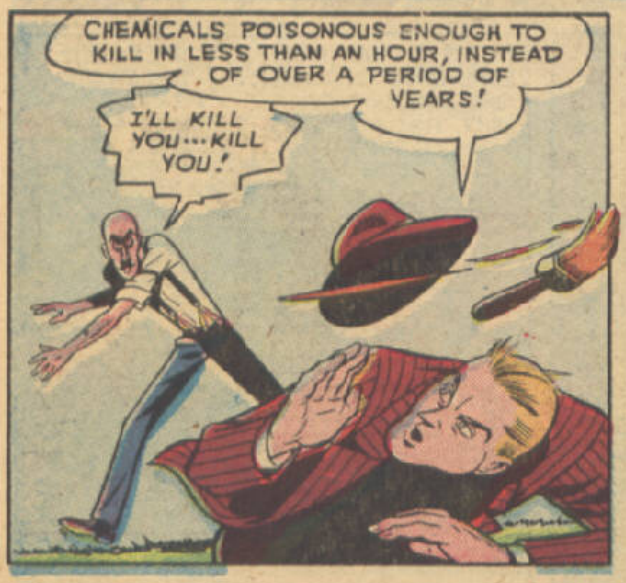
SHE CAN'T DO IT, UNDERSTAND? I'M HER MANAGER, AND I WON'T PERMIT IT!
I CAN'T SEE WHY YOU SHOULD OBJECT, ANDOR! IT'LL BENEFIT YOU!

I HAVE NO REAL OBJECTION! IT'S JUST THAT I THOUGHT, OUT OF RESPECT FOR CARL'S MEMORY, WE OUGHT TO...
NUTS! THE ACT GOES ON TOMORROW AS USUAL!

Next day...
THE PAINT IS ALMOST READY! SHALL I PUT IT ON NITA FIRST?
NO! I'LL GO FIRST, IF THE LADY DOESN'T MIND!

SUIT YOURSELF!
ONE MOMENT! BEFORE YOU DAUB THAT PAINT ON TINY, WOULD YOU PUT SOME OF IT ON THE BACK OF YOUR HAND?

N-NO! WHY SHOULD I?
BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T, I'LL SUSPECT THAT YOU'VE GOT A STRONG DOSE OF THOSE CONCENTRATED CHEMICALS IN THE PAINT!


CHEMICALS POISONOUS ENOUGH TO KILL IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, INSTEAD OF OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS!
I'LL KILL YOU...KILL YOU!

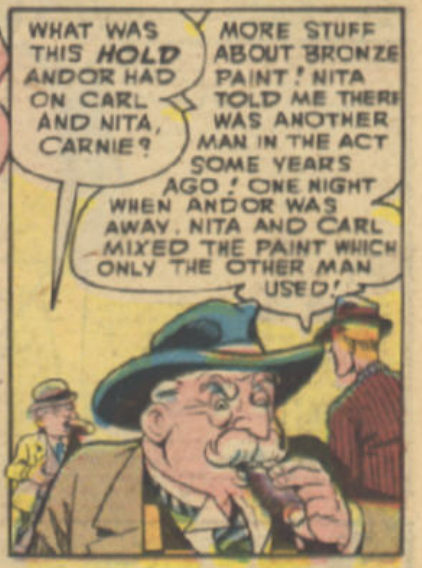
NITA TOLD ME ABOUT THE NEAT LITTLE RABBIT PUNCH YOU GAVE CARL WHEN HE WAS ONLY STUNNED BY THE ACCIDENT!
YES, I BROKE HIS NECK! HE WAS GETTING OUT OF HAND! I MADE THEM JITTERY AND WAITED FOR MY OPPORTUNITY!

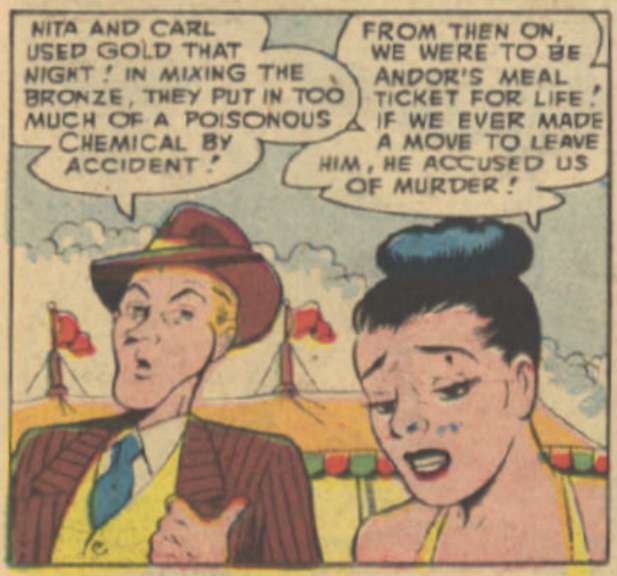
HE AND NITA WANTED TO LEAVE ME HIGH AND DRY WITH THEIR FANTASTIC NOTIONS ABOUT RETIRING! THEY THOUGHT THEY'D BE ABLE TO IGNORE THE HOLD I HAD ON THEM!
YEAH! THE HOLD GOT SOME NEW STRENGTH IN NITA'S CASE AFTER THE MURDER! BUT SHE FOUGHT IT OFF AND TALKED TO ME! IT SEEMED TO ME YOU HAD NOTHING ON THEM, BUT YOU WERE VENGEFUL ENOUGH TO KILL CARL AND LET NITA PAY!

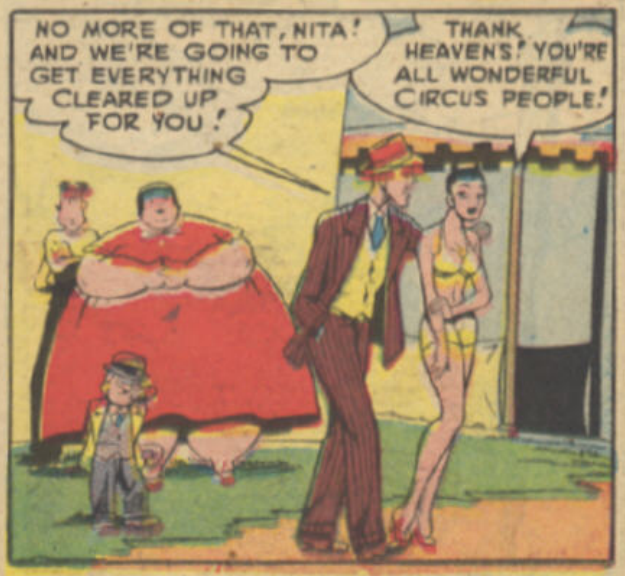
CARNIE! LOOK OUT!

JUPITER! HE FELL INTO IT HIMSELF! HE CAN'T LIVE A MINUTE WITH THAT KIND OF POISON GOING INTO HIS MOUTH AND NOSE!
AGH-H-H!

WHAT ABOUT THE ACT? IS IT ON OR IS IT OFF?
ANDOR'S DEAD! I GUESS THE ACT IS OFF! WE ONLY PRETENDED WE WANTED TO PUT IT ON SO ANDOR WOULD ATTEMPT TO FINISH HIS REVENGE ON NITA!


WHAT WAS THIS HOLD ANDOR HAD ON CARL AND NITA, CARNIE?
MORE STUFF ABOUT BRONZE PAINT! NITA TOLD ME THERE WAS ANOTHER MAN IN THE ACT SOME YEARS AGO! ONE NIGHT WHEN ANDOR WAS AWAY, NITA AND CARL MIXED THE PAINT WHICH ONLY THE OTHER MAN USED!


NITA AND CARL USED GOLD THAT NIGHT! IN MIXING THE BRONZE, THEY PUT IN TOO MUCH OF A POISONOUS CHEMICAL BY ACCIDENT!
FROM THEN ON, WE WERE TO BE ANDOR'S MEAL TICKET FOR LIFE! IF WE EVER MADE A MOVE TO LEAVE HIM, HE ACCUSED US OF MURDER!

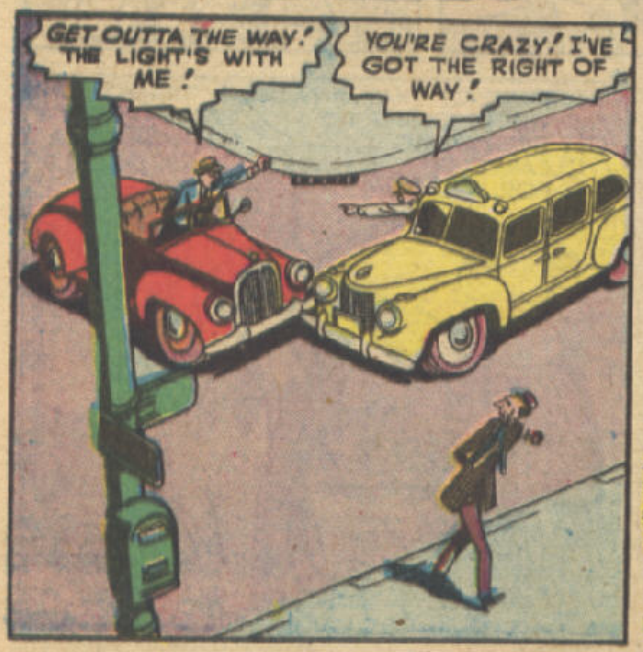

NO MORE OF THAT, NITA! AND WE'RE GOING TO GET EVERYTHING CLEARED UP FOR YOU!
THANK HEAVENS! YOU'RE ALL WONDERFUL CIRCUS PEOPLE!

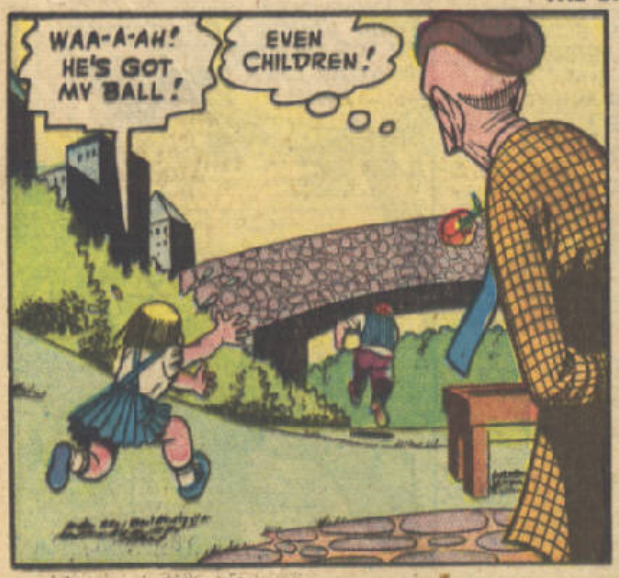
SPUDO

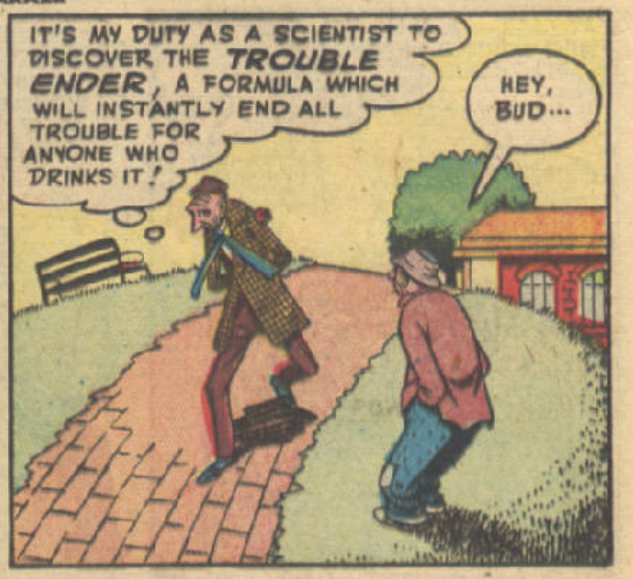
I COULD SWEAR IT FEELS LIKE HE'S HOLDING US!

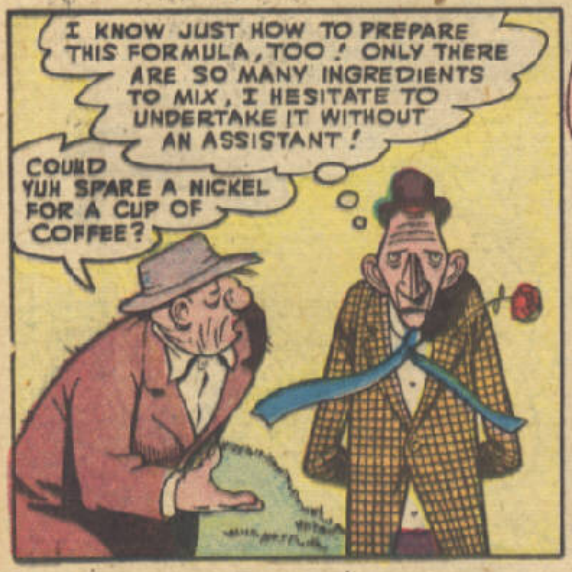
HOW CAN HE BE? CAN'T Y'SEE HE'S HOLDIN' THE DAME'S HANDS?

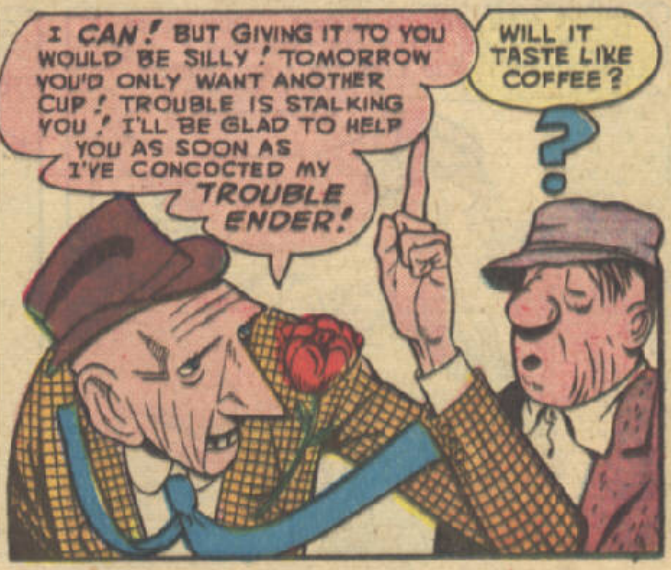
By Klaus Nordling



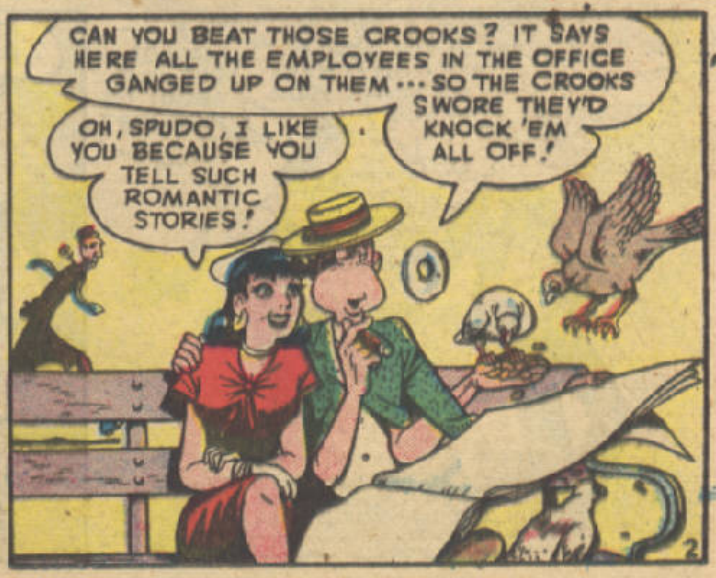

WAA-A-AH! HE'S GOT MY BALL!
EVEN CHILDREN!

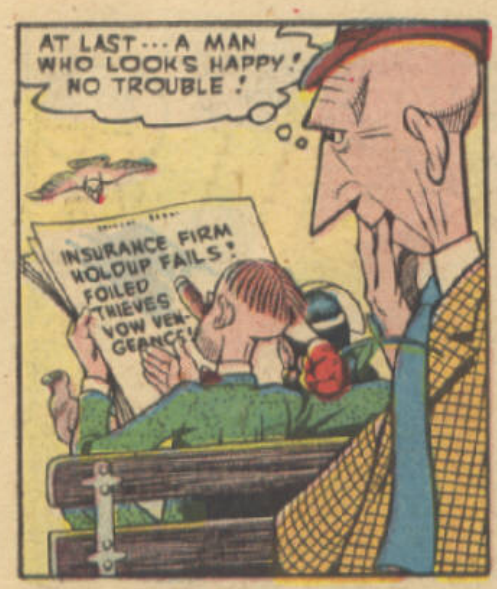

IT'S MY DUTY AS A SCIENTIST TO DISCOVER THE TROUBLE ENDER, A FORMULA WHICH WILL INSTANTLY END ALL TROUBLE FOR ANYONE WHO DRINKS IT!
HEY, BUD...


I KNOW JUST HOW TO PREPARE THIS FORMULA, TOO! ONLY THERE ARE SO MANY INGREDIENTS TO MIX, I HESITATE TO UNDERTAKE IT WITHOUT AN ASSISTANT!
COULD YUH SPARE A NICKEL FOR A CUP OF COFFEE?


I CAN! BUT GIVING IT TO YOU WOULD BE SILLY! TOMORROW YOU'D ONLY WANT ANOTHER CUP! TROUBLE IS STALKING YOU! I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU AS SOON AS I'VE CONCOCTED MY TROUBLE ENDER!
WILL IT TASTE LIKE COFFEE?
?

NEVER FEAR! IF IT DOESN'T, YOU WON'T BE TROUBLED BY THE FACT!


CAN YOU BEAT THOSE CROOKS? IT SAYS HERE ALL THE EMPLOYEES IN THE OFFICE GANGED UP ON THEM... SO THE CROOKS SWORE THEY'D KNOCK 'EM ALL OFF!
OH, SPUDO, I LIKE YOU BECAUSE YOU TELL SUCH ROMANTIC STORIES!

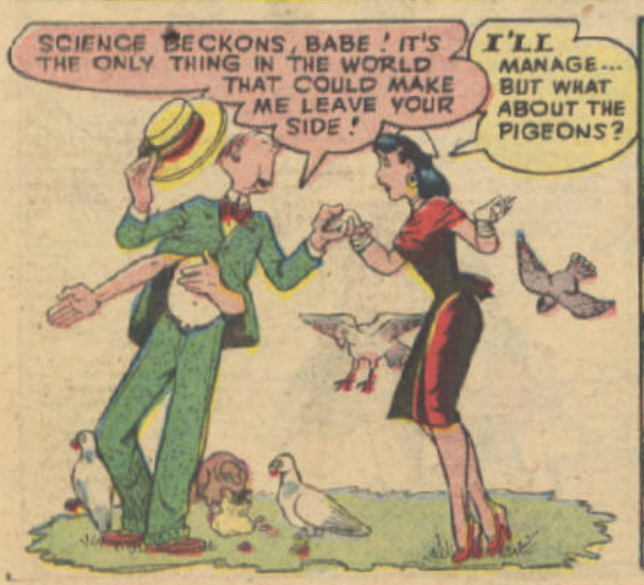

AT LAST... A MAN WHO LOOKS HAPPY! NO TROUBLE!
INSURANCE FIRM HOLDUP FAILS! FOILED THIEVES VOW VENGEANCE!

THERE'S SOMETHING UNUSUAL ABOUT HIM! I WONDER WHAT IT IS!

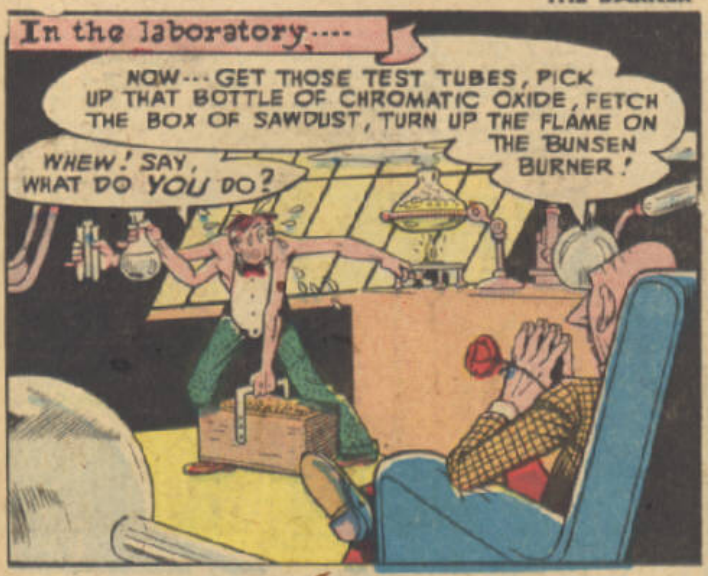
FOUR HANDS! COULD THAT BE IT? GOODNESS! WHAT AN IDEA I HAVE!

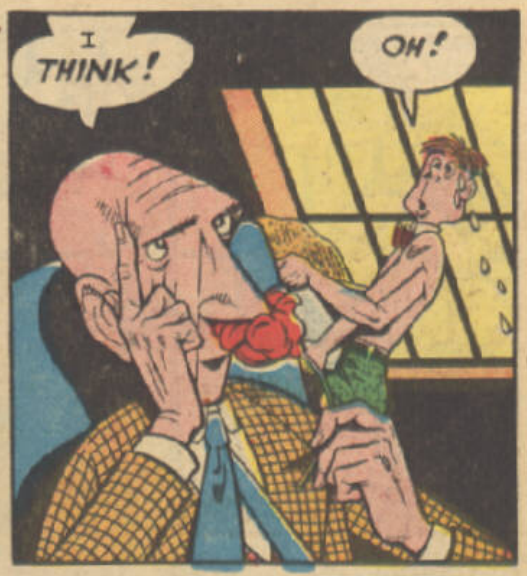
YOUNG MAN, YOU'RE HAPPY... BUT MOST PEOPLE HAVE LOTS OF TROUBLE! WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO MAKE THOSE OTHER PEOPLE HAPPY, TOO?
SURE! WHY NOT?

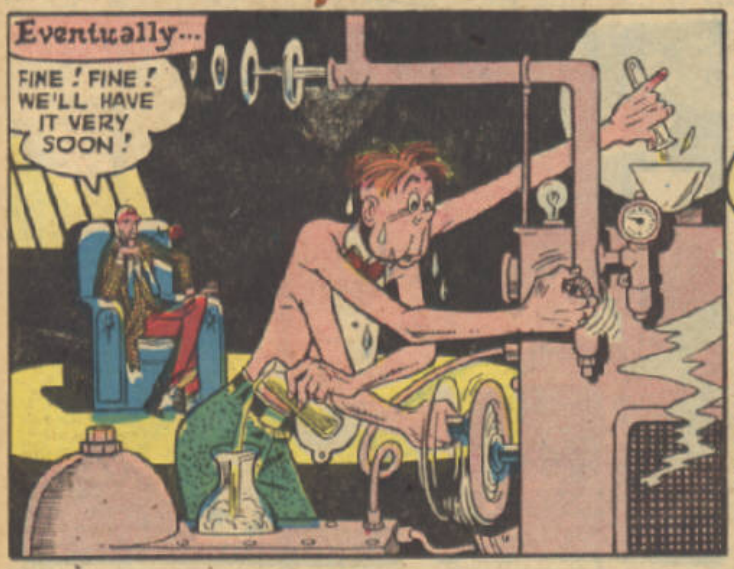
GOOD! I CAN MAKE A FORMULA THAT WILL BE A TROUBLE ENDER, BUT I NEED A FEW EXTRA HANDS AROUND MY LABORATORY! YOU'VE GOT 'EM!
I SEE!

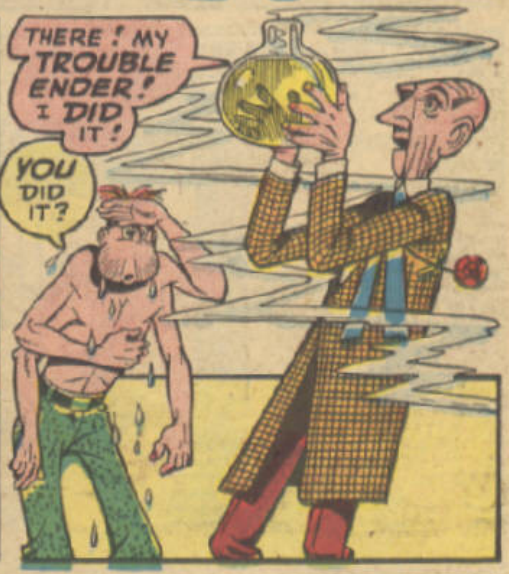

SCIENCE BECKONS, BABE! IT'S THE ONLY THING IN THE WORLD THAT COULD MAKE ME LEAVE YOUR SIDE!
I'LL MANAGE... BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PIGEONS?

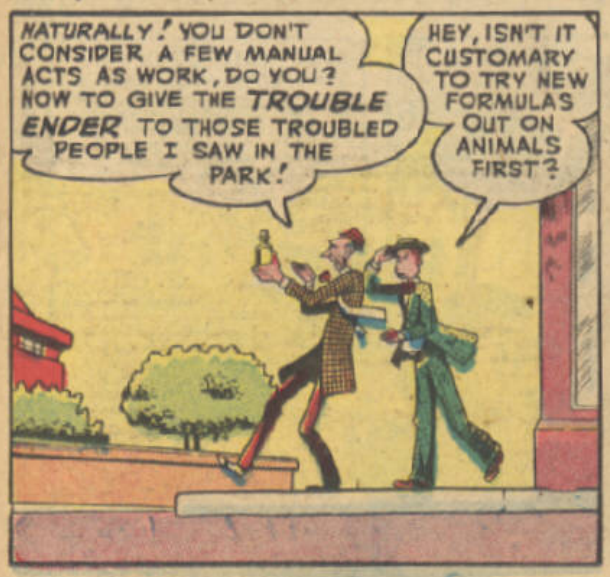
AS SOON AS I MAKE MY TROUBLE ENDER, I'LL LET THEM HAVE SOME AND THEY WON'T CARE WHETHER THEY EAT OR NOT!

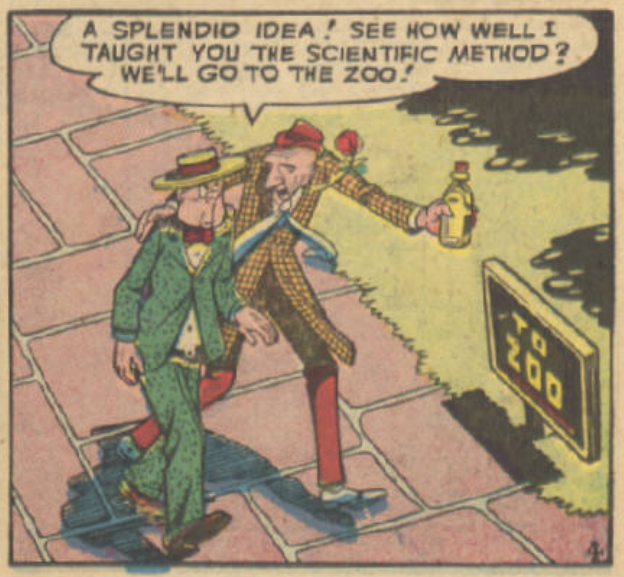

In the laboratory....
NOW... GET THOSE TEST TUBES, PICK UP THAT BOTTLE OF CHROMATIC OXIDE, FETCH THE BOX OF SAWDUST, TURN UP THE FLAME ON THE BUNSEN BURNER!
WHEW! SAY, WHAT DO YOU DO?


I THINK!
OH!


Eventually...
FINE! FINE! WE'LL HAVE IT VERY SOON!


THERE! MY TROUBLE ENDER! I DID IT!
YOU DID IT?

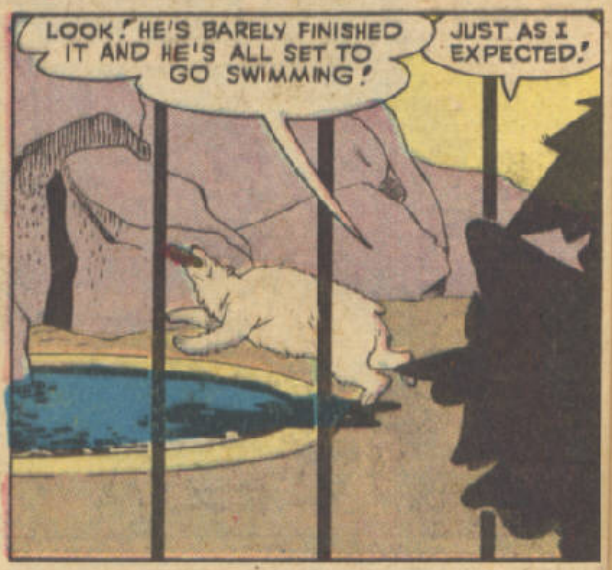

NATURALLY! YOU DON'T CONSIDER A FEW MANUAL ACTS AS WORK, DO YOU? NOW TO GIVE THE TROUBLE ENDER TO THOSE TROUBLED PEOPLE I SAW IN THE PARK!
HEY, ISN'T IT CUSTOMARY TO TRY NEW FORMULAS OUT ON ANIMALS FIRST?


A SPLENDID IDEA! SEE HOW WELL I TAUGHT YOU THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD? WE'LL GO TO THE ZOO!
TO ZOO

WHO IS THE UNHAPPIEST, MOST TROUBLED ANIMAL IN THE ZOO TODAY ?
THE NEW POLAR BEAR !

HE CAN'T GET USED TO THE PLACE ! HE'S SO MISERABLE HE WON'T EVEN GO IN FOR A SWIM ... AND EVERYBODY KNOWS POLAR BEARS LOVE SWIMMING !
PUT SOME OF MY TROUBLE ENDER ON HIS MEAT ! THEN WATCH HIM !

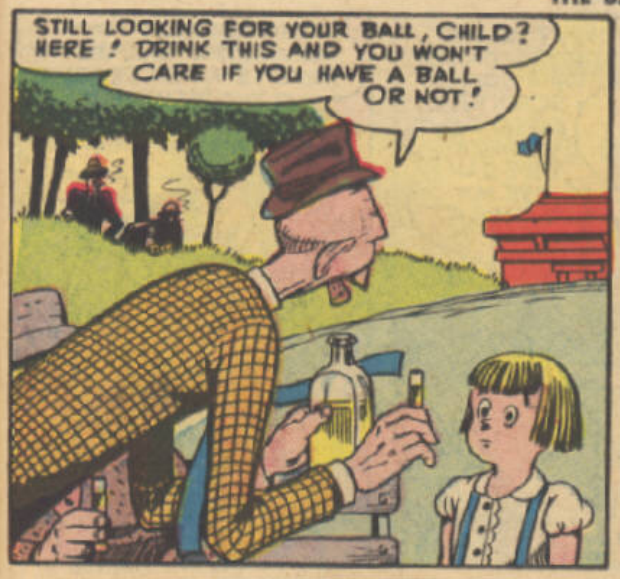
YOU MEAN THIS'LL END ALL HIS TROUBLES ?
SLUGGSY ! LET'S WATCH THIS !
NO QUESTION ABOUT IT !

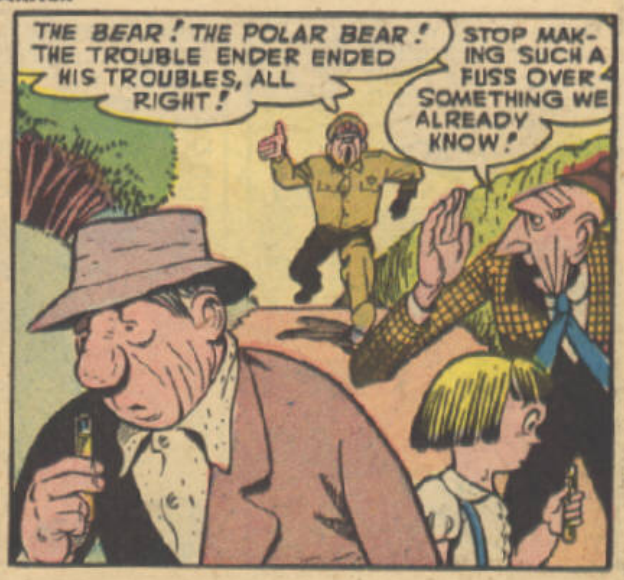

LOOK ! HE'S BARELY FINISHED IT AND HE'S ALL SET TO GO SWIMMING !
JUST AS I EXPECTED !

SAY, HE'S STAYING UNDER WATER A LONG TIME !
NATURALLY ! HE'S BEEN AWAY FROM IT FOR SO LONG HE CAN'T GET ENOUGH !

NOW I'LL GIVE SOME TO MY FRIEND, THE TRAMP !

JUST A LITTLE IN THIS TINY VIAL WILL END ALL YOUR TROUBLES !
I HOPE IT TASTES LIKE COFFEE !


STILL LOOKING FOR YOUR BALL, CHILD? HERE! DRINK THIS AND YOU WON'T CARE IF YOU HAVE A BALL OR NOT!


THE BEAR! THE POLAR BEAR! THE TROUBLE ENDER ENDED HIS TROUBLES, ALL RIGHT!
STOP MAKING SUCH A FUSS OVER SOMETHING WE ALREADY KNOW!

BUT HE STAYED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POOL AND DROWNED!
HOW INTERESTING! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS THE WAY THE FORMULA WOULD WORK!

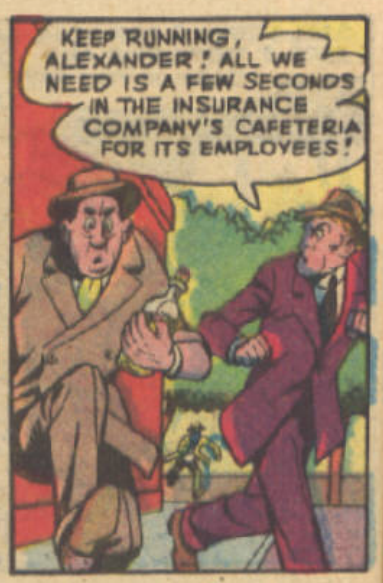
GRAWK! IT ENDS YOUR TROUBLES BY MAKING YOU COMMIT SUICIDE! GIMME THAT STUFF--- AND THAT--- AND THAT! IT'S LUCKY THEY DIDN'T DRINK IT!
SLUGGSY, DID YOU HEAR THAT?

ALEXANDER, WE ARE THINKING THE SAME THOUGHTS! IF WE CAN GET SOME OF THIS FORMULA INTO THE INSIDES OF THOSE INSURANCE COMPANY EMPLOYEES, WE CAN MAKE GOOD OUR VOW OF VENGEANCE!
SO THE NEXT STEP IS TO PART THAT CHARACTER FROM THE FORMULA!

NOW I'LL NEVER KNOW WHETHER IT TASTES LIKE COFFEE!
AS I SEE IT, YOU DO NOT OBJECT TO THE END RESULT, WHICH IS THE ENDING OF TROUBLE, BUT TO THE MEANS! VERY UNSCIENTIFIC!

WE'RE SURE YOU DON'T WANT THIS HORRIBLE STUFF! BUT WE DO!
HUH?

YAWP! I KNOW THOSE FACES! THEY'RE THE CROOKS WHO THREATENED TO KILL THE INSURANCE COMPANY EMPLOYEES! WE'VE GOT TO GET THEM!
WHY? MAYBE THEY'VE THOUGHT OF A USEFUL SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT IN WHICH THEY CAN USE MY FORMULA!


KEEP RUNNING, ALEXANDER! ALL WE NEED IS A FEW SECONDS IN THE INSURANCE COMPANY'S CAFETERIA FOR ITS EMPLOYEES!

WE MADE IT! HE'S HALF A BLOCK BEHIND US!
CAFETERIA KITCHEN
PRIVATE

HI, CHEF! LOTSA PEOPLE EATING SOUP TODAY?
YEAH... EVERYBODY! GET OUTTA MY WAY! I GOTTA DISH IT OUT!

SURE! SURE! DISH IT OUT! I WAS ONLY GETTING SOME DATA FOR THE MAIN OFFICE ON HOW MUCH SOUP THE EMPLOYEES EAT!
STOP! DON'T TOUCH THAT SOUP!

WHADDAYA MEAN, STOP? WHAT'S GOING ON HERE TODAY, ANYWAY?
AWK!

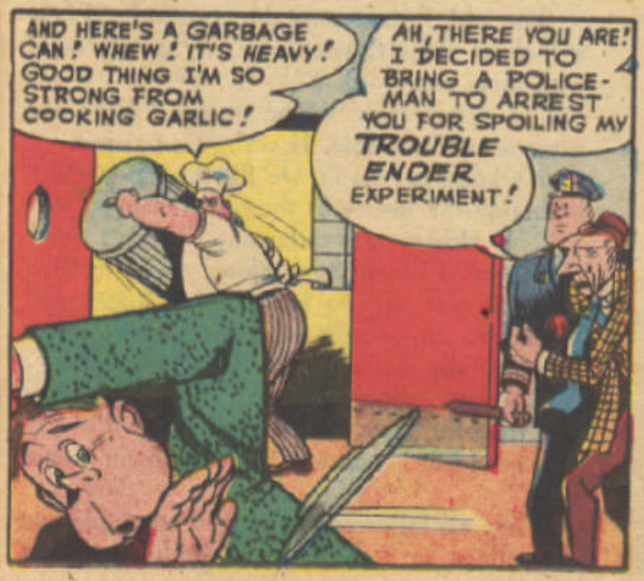
HOLD ON, YOU TWO! YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY!

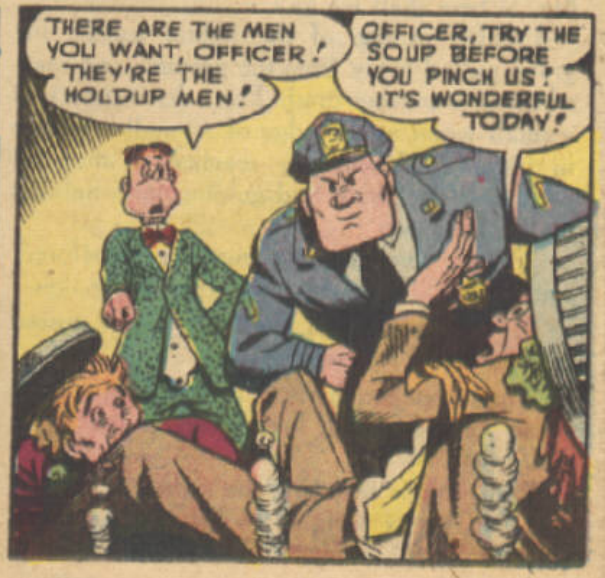
WITH THE LID ON TIGHT, YOU OUGHT TO STAY PUT UNTIL I'M READY FOR YOU!

DON'T EAT THAT SOUP! IT'LL MAKE YOU COMMIT SUICIDE!
THE GUY'S CRAZY!

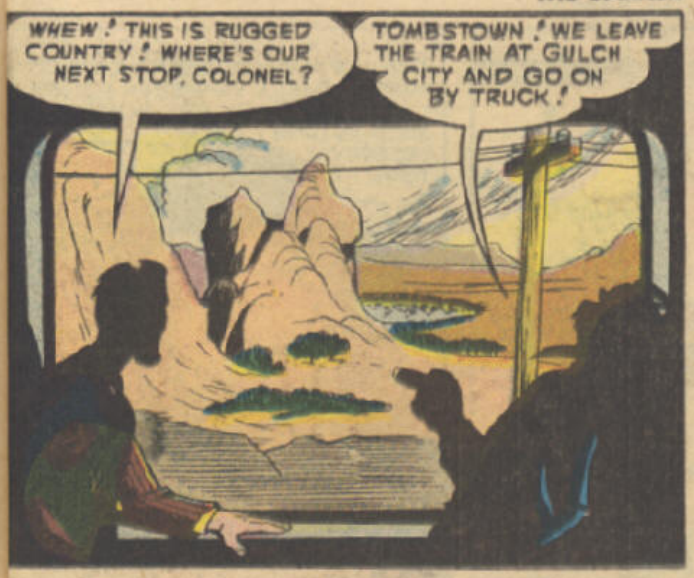
STOP HIM! HE RUINED MY DRESS!

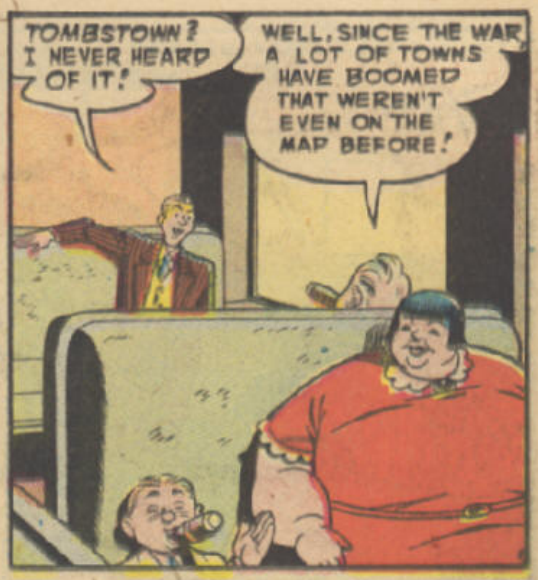
ALL RIGHT, IF YOU WANT MY SOUP!
HERE'S MINE, TOO!


AND HERE'S A GARBAGE CAN! WHEW! IT'S HEAVY! GOOD THING I'M SO STRONG FROM COOKING GARLIC!
AH, THERE YOU ARE! I DECIDED TO BRING A POLICEMAN TO ARREST YOU FOR SPOILING MY TROUBLE ENDER EXPERIMENT!


THERE ARE THE MEN YOU WANT, OFFICER! THEY'RE THE HOLDUP MEN!
OFFICER, TRY THE SOUP BEFORE YOU PINCH US! IT'S WONDERFUL TODAY!

THE BARKER
AWR-R-K!
I THINK I SEE A GHOST!
WHADJA EXPECT IN A GHOST TOWN... CASH CUSTOMERS?
Carnie Calahan, THE BARKER, has been called upon to spiel to some tough crowds, but pitching to thin air was his newest and roughest assignment!
By Klaus Nordling

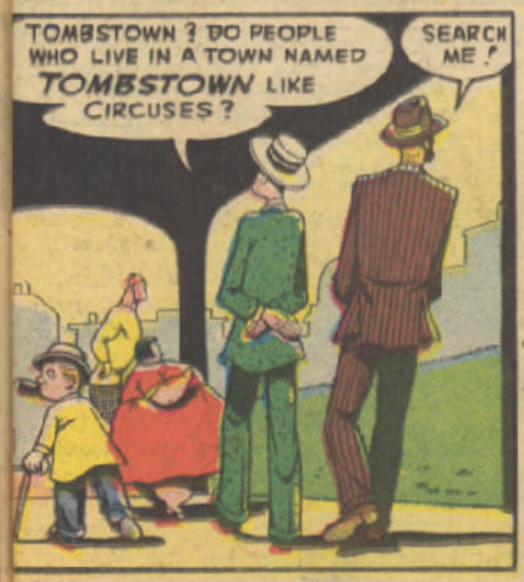

WHEW! THIS IS RUGGED COUNTRY! WHERE'S OUR NEXT STOP, COLONEL?
TOMBSTOWN! WE LEAVE THE TRAIN AT GULCH CITY AND GO ON BY TRUCK!

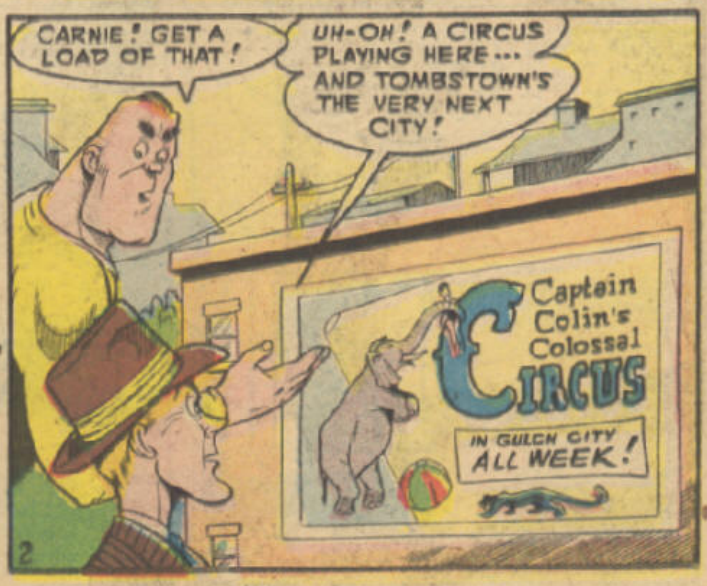

TOMBSTOWN? I NEVER HEARD OF IT!
WELL, SINCE THE WAR A LOT OF TOWNS HAVE BOOMED THAT WEREN'T EVEN ON THE MAP BEFORE!

MAYBE! BUT WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS PLACE?
WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT? I DON'T HAVE TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT! THE BEST ADVANCE MAN IN THE BUSINESS BOOKED US INTO IT! A TOWN CHARLIE RUCE PICKS IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ANY CIRCUS!

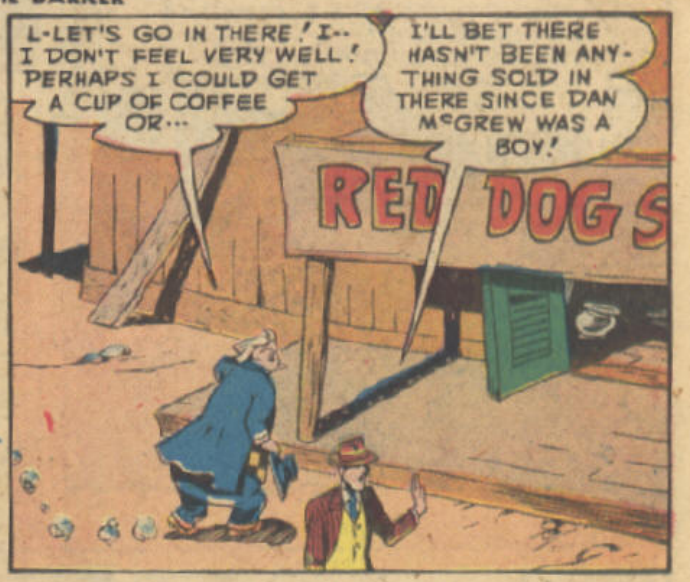
ALL RIGHT! DON'T BITE MY HEAD OFF! I WAS ONLY ASKING!
HARUMPH!

Later...
THIS IS A NICE, LIVE LOOKING BURG! WHAT'S ITS NAME?
GULCH CITY! BUT WE DON'T STOP HERE! WE GO ON BY TRUCK TO ANOTHER TOWN NAMED TOMBSTOWN!

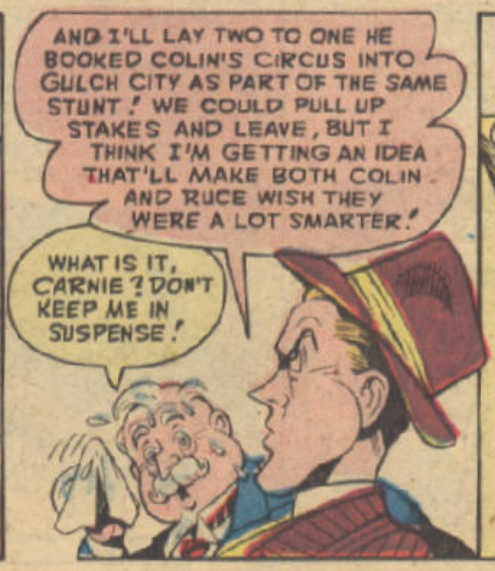

TOMBSTOWN? DO PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN A TOWN NAMED TOMBSTOWN LIKE CIRCUSES?
SEARCH ME!


CARNIE! GET A LOAD OF THAT!
UH-OH! A CIRCUS PLAYING HERE... AND TOMBSTOWN'S THE VERY NEXT CITY!
Captain Colin's Colossal CIRCUS
IN GULCH CITY ALL WEEK!

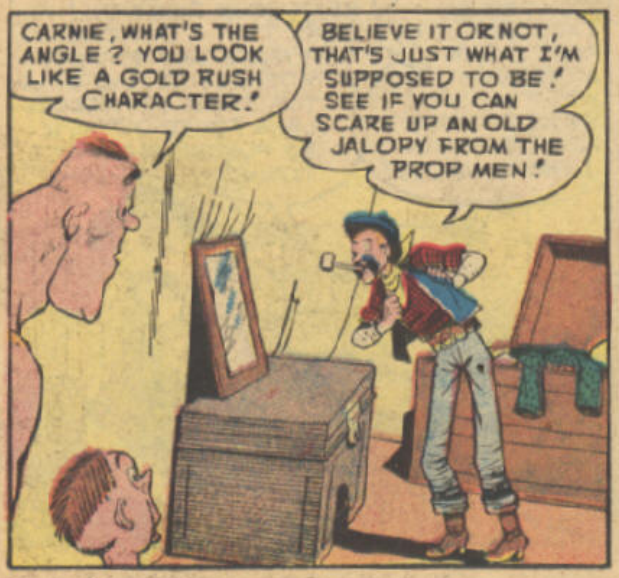
IMPOSSIBLE!
LOOK FOR YOURSELF, COLONEL!

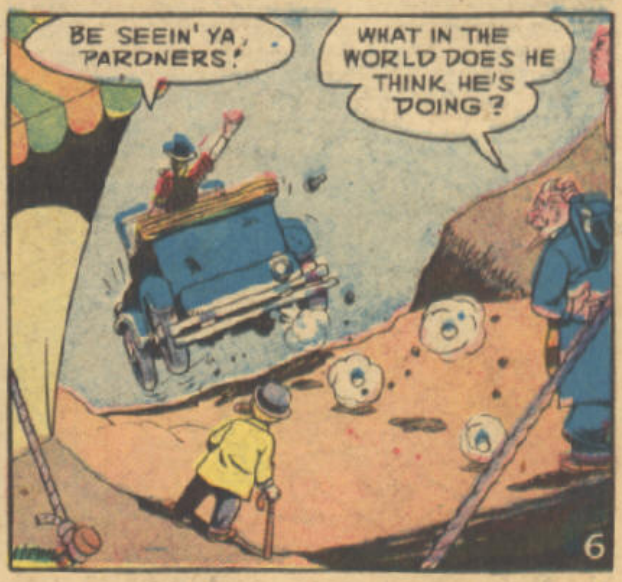

L-LET'S GO IN THERE! I-- I DON'T FEEL VERY WELL! PERHAPS I COULD GET A CUP OF COFFEE OR...
I'LL BET THERE HASN'T BEEN ANYTHING SOLD IN THERE SINCE DAN McGREW WAS A BOY!
RED DOG S

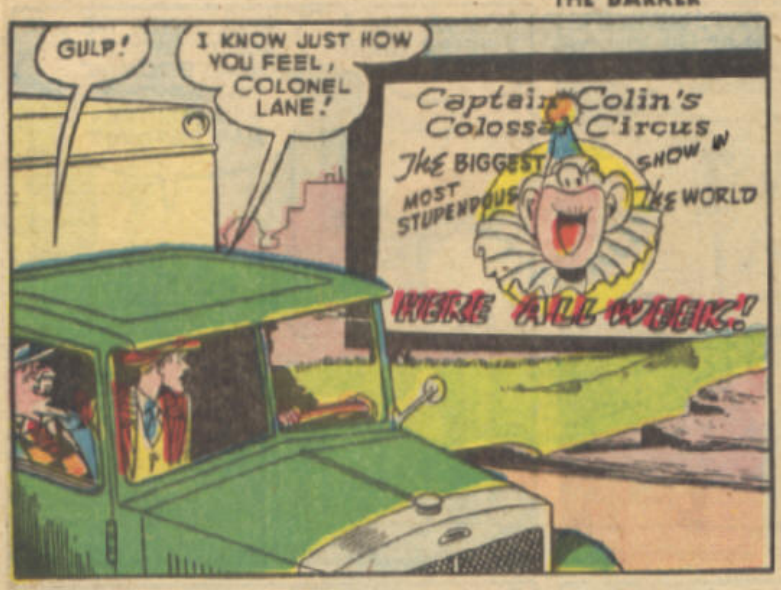
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT! WHAT'LL WE DO NOW?
IT'S PLAIN ENOUGH THAT YOU'VE BEEN TAKEN BY CHARLIE RUCE, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAD SUCH CONFIDENCE IN HIM!


AND I'LL LAY TWO TO ONE HE BOOKED COLIN'S CIRCUS INTO GULCH CITY AS PART OF THE SAME STUNT! WE COULD PULL UP STAKES AND LEAVE, BUT I THINK I'M GETTING AN IDEA THAT'LL MAKE BOTH COLIN AND RUCE WISH THEY WERE A LOT SMARTER!
WHAT IS IT, CARNIE? DON'T KEEP ME IN SUSPENSE!

A LITTLE SUSPENSE'LL DO YOU GOOD! MAYBE IT'LL TEACH YOU TO BEWARE OF SMOOTH OPERATORS LIKE CHARLIE RUCE!

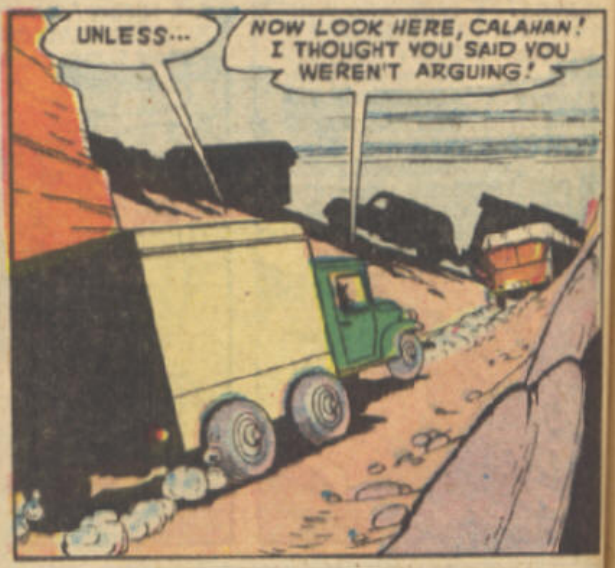

CARNIE, WHAT'S THE ANGLE? YOU LOOK LIKE A GOLD RUSH CHARACTER!
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO BE! SEE IF YOU CAN SCARE UP AN OLD JALOPY FROM THE PROP MEN!

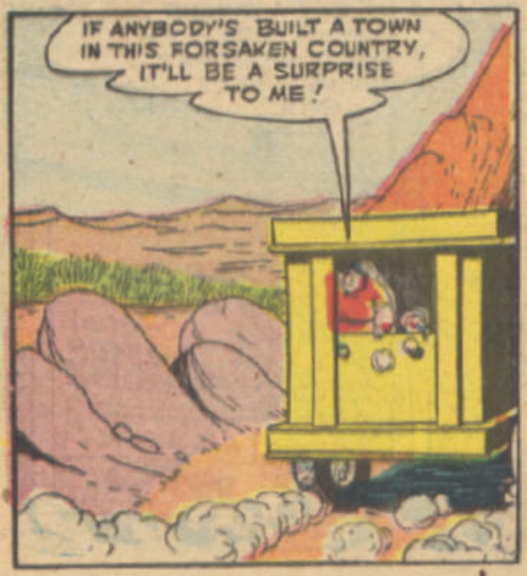

BE SEEIN' YA, PARDNERS!
WHAT IN THE WORLD DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING?


GULP!
I KNOW JUST HOW YOU FEEL, COLONEL LANE!
Captain Colin's Colossal Circus
THE BIGGEST SHOW IN THE WORLD
MOST STUPENDOUS
HERE ALL WEEK!

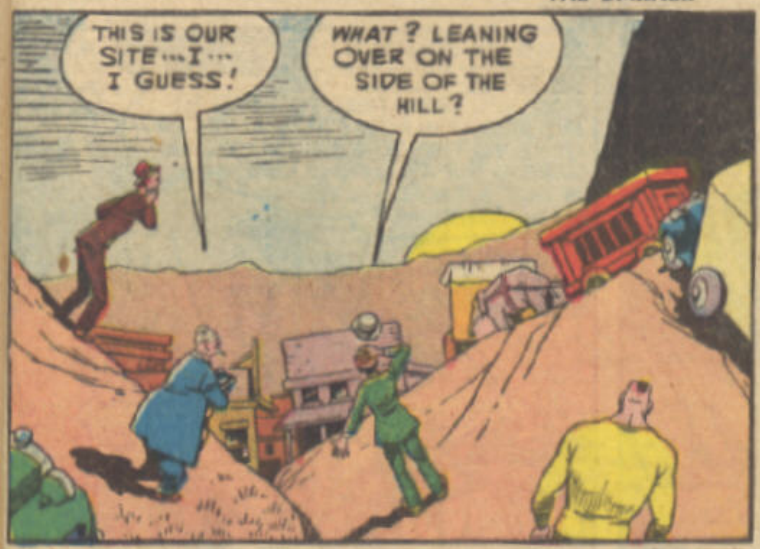
WELL--ER--THAT IS---CHRIS COLIN'S ALWAYS BEEN A RIVAL OF MINE! GUESS HE'S BEEN FOLLOWING OUR BOOKINGS HOPING TO SHOW US UP IN A NEARBY TOWN!

BUT I KNOW ONE THING---IF CHARLIE RUCE PICKED TOMBSTOWN FOR US, IT MUST BE A BETTER SITE THAN GULCH CITY! WHY, I'VE KNOWN CHARLIE'S REPUTATION FOR YEARS! HE'S A TERRIFIC ADVANCE MAN!
I'M NOT ARGUING WITH YOU, COLONEL! ONLY YOU'D THINK HE'D KNOW ENOUGH NOT TO BOOK US INTO A TOWN NEXT TO A RIVAL CIRCUS!


UNLESS---
NOW LOOK HERE, CALAHAN! I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WEREN'T ARGUING!

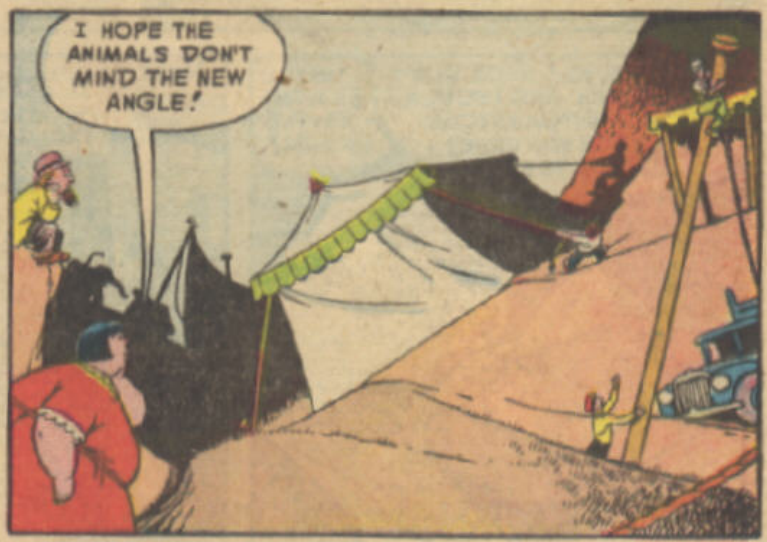

IF ANYBODY'S BUILT A TOWN IN THIS FORSAKEN COUNTRY, IT'LL BE A SURPRISE TO ME!

DON'T TELL ME THAT'S IT---ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL!
ER--WHY NOT ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL? PEOPLE PROBABLY MAKE A LIVING IN SILVER OR COPPER MINING! MINES ARE USUALLY UNDER HILLS, AREN'T THEY?
TOMBSTOWN


THIS IS OUR SITE ... I ... I GUESS!
WHAT? LEANING OVER ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL?

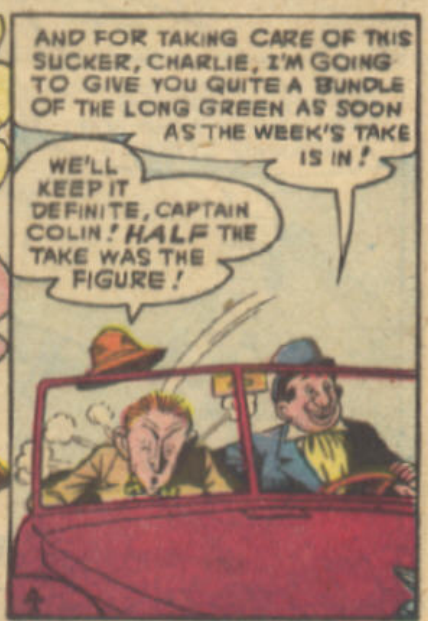
WELL ... THE PEOPLE LIVE ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL! IF THEY CAN STAND IT, WE CAN!
BUT I DON'T SEE ANY INHABITANTS!

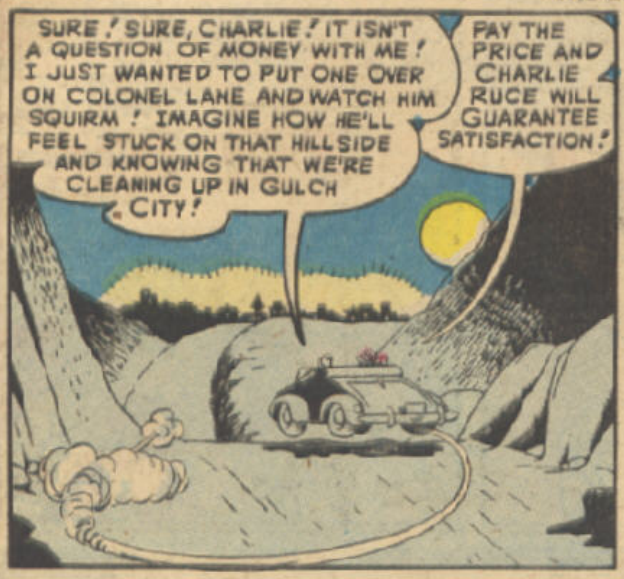
OF COURSE NOT! IT'S LATE IN THE DAY! THEY'RE ALL TIRED FROM A HARD DAY IN THE MINES! I'M GLAD OF IT ... GIVES US A CHANCE TO SETTLE DOWN WITHOUT BEING DISTURBED! YOU'LL SEE THE INHABITANTS IN THE MORNING, ALL RIGHT!
HMM!

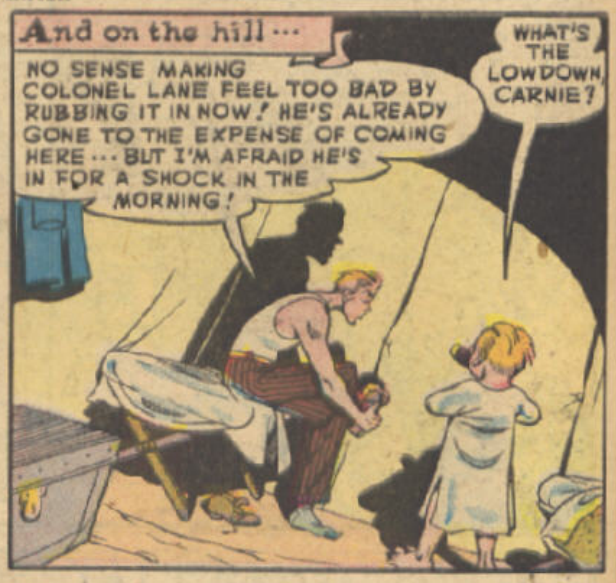

I HOPE THE ANIMALS DON'T MIND THE NEW ANGLE!

Meanwhile...
HA! HA! HO! HO! THIS IS KILLING ME! THAT NUMBSKULL'S ACTUALLY PUTTING UP HIS CIRCUS ON THAT HILL, SMACK-DAB IN FRONT OF A GHOST TOWN!
HA! HA! HA!

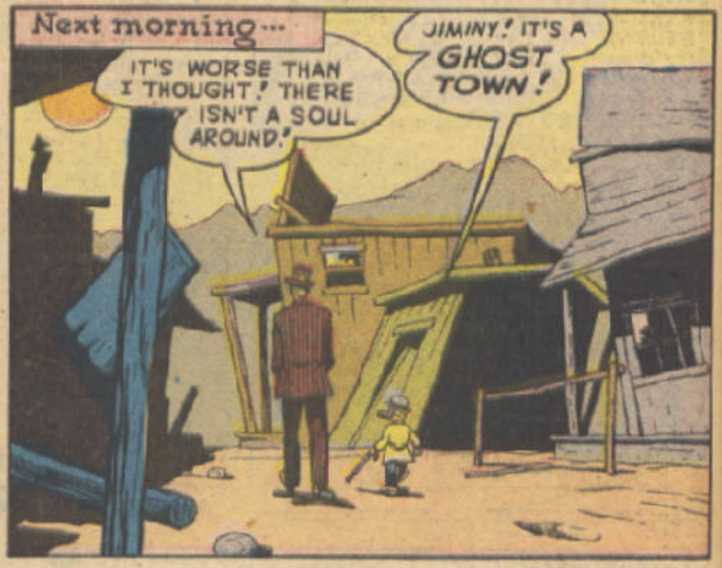
CHARLIE, YOU'RE A GENIUS, HORNSWOGGLING THE COLONEL INTO A SUCKER PROPOSITION LIKE THAT! HA! HA! I'D SURE LIKE TO SEE HIS FACE WHEN HE REALLY GRASPS THAT TOMBSTOWN IS A GHOST TOWN!
NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK! THAT'S MY PRINCIPLE!


AND FOR TAKING CARE OF THIS SUCKER, CHARLIE, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU QUITE A BUNDLE OF THE LONG GREEN AS SOON AS THE WEEK'S TAKE IS IN!
WE'LL KEEP IT DEFINITE, CAPTAIN COLIN! HALF THE TAKE WAS THE FIGURE!


SURE! SURE, CHARLIE! IT ISN'T A QUESTION OF MONEY WITH ME! I JUST WANTED TO PUT ONE OVER ON COLONEL LANE AND WATCH HIM SQUIRM! IMAGINE HOW HE'LL FEEL STUCK ON THAT HILLSIDE AND KNOWING THAT WE'RE CLEANING UP IN GULCH CITY!
PAY THE PRICE AND CHARLIE RUCE WILL GUARANTEE SATISFACTION!

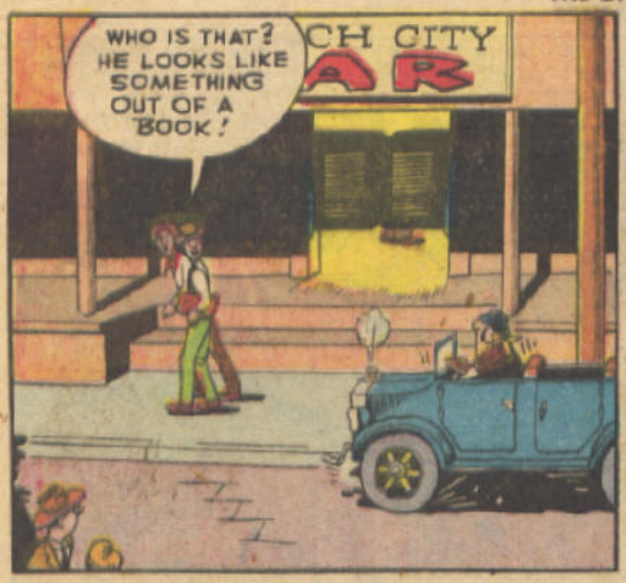

And on the hill ...
NO SENSE MAKING COLONEL LANE FEEL TOO BAD BY RUBBING IT IN NOW! HE'S ALREADY GONE TO THE EXPENSE OF COMING HERE ... BUT I'M AFRAID HE'S IN FOR A SHOCK IN THE MORNING!
WHAT'S THE LOWDOWN, CARNIE?

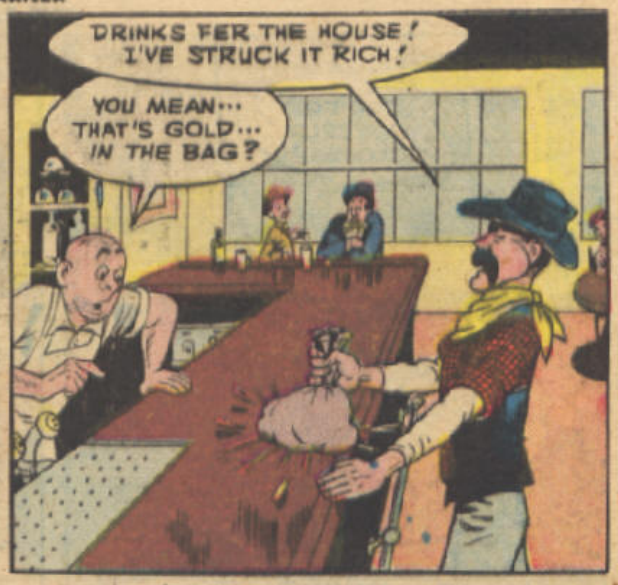
I'M NOT SURE! BUT I DON'T THINK THERE ARE ENOUGH PEOPLE IN TOMBSTOWN TO PAY FOR WATERING OUR HORSES!
THAT'LL BE A FINE KETTLE OF FISH!


Next morning ...
IT'S WORSE THAN I THOUGHT! THERE ISN'T A SOUL AROUND!
JIMINY! IT'S A GHOST TOWN!

AH ... LOVELY MORNING, ISN'T IT, BOYS? OUT FOR A MORNING STROLL?
YEAH! AND WE AREN'T ENJOYING IT!

NO? WH ... WHY NOT?
THIS PLACE IS A GHOST TOWN! IF THERE'S BEEN A HUMAN INHABITANT HERE IN SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS, I'LL EAT MY HAT!


WHO IS THAT? HE LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A BOOK!
CH CITY
AR

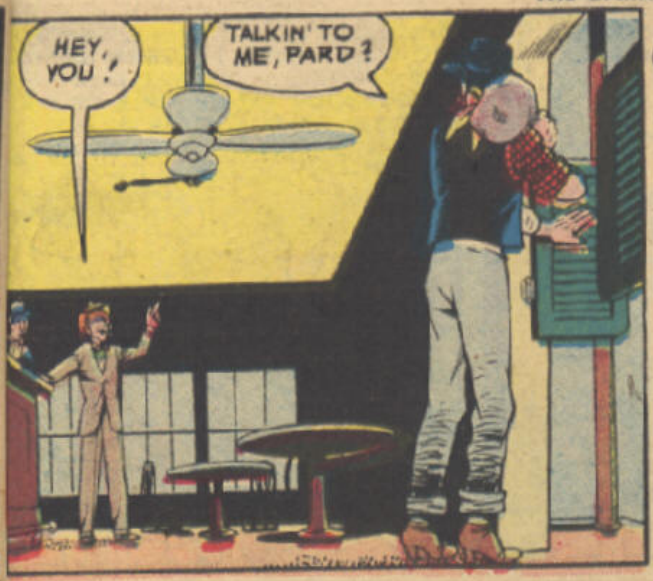

DRINKS FER THE HOUSE! I'VE STRUCK IT RICH!
YOU MEAN... THAT'S GOLD... IN THE BAG?

WHERE? WHERE Y'BEEN MINING?
TOMBSTOWN! AND BELIEVE ME, PARD, THAR'S PLENTY MORE WHAR THIS COME FROM!

GOLD!
GOLD'S BEEN STRUCK IN TOMBSTOWN!
GOLD!
GOLD!
WAAL, I RECKON EVERYBODY'S TOO PLUMB EXCITED TO DRINK WITH ME...

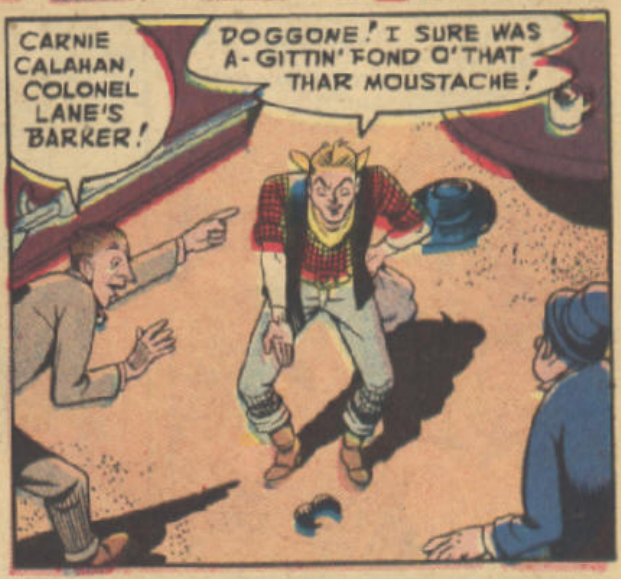
THAT GUY'S STARTED A GOLD RUSH TO TOMBSTOWN! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THAT MEANS?
SURE! NOBODY'L BE HERE TO GO TO YOUR CIRCUS AND ALL THE GOLD PROSPECTORS'LL BE SPENDING THEIR DOUGH IN COLONEL LANE'S SHOW!
STRAWBERRY
Cactus Milk Cocktail 35¢

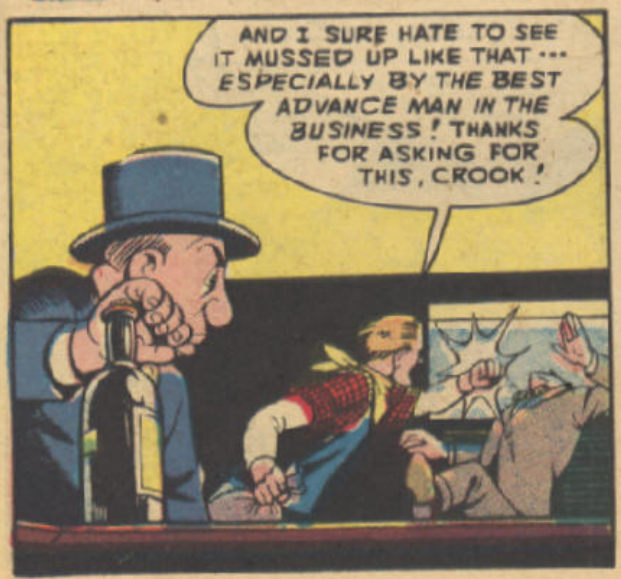
DON'T BE SO CALM ABOUT IT, RUCE! OUR AGREEMENT WAS THAT YOU WERE TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT OF LANE'S CIRCUS!
KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON! IT'S MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE THAT MADE THIS SUPPOSED PROSPECTOR FIND GOLD THE SAME DAY COLONEL LANE FOUND OUT HE'D BE PLAYING IN A GHOST TOWN!

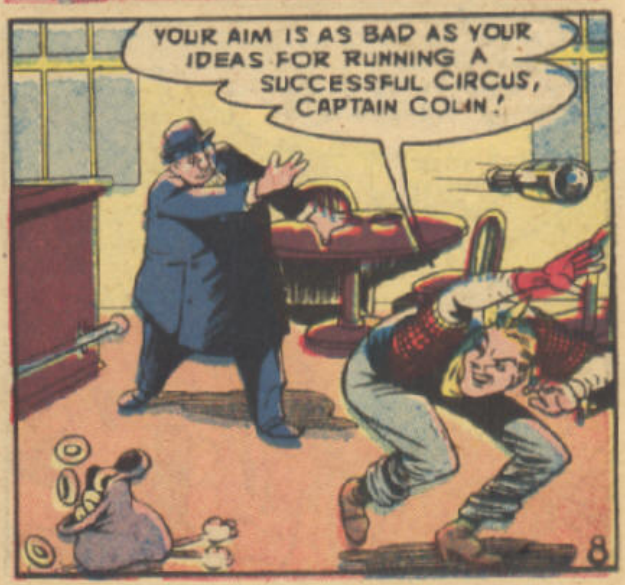

HEY, YOU!
TALKIN' TO ME, PARD?

YEAH! YOU AREN'T FOOLING CHARLIE RUCE WITH THAT DISGUISE! WHO SENT YOU HERE TO PULL THIS STUNT... COLONEL LANE?
ARE YOU ASKIN' ME OR TELLIN' ME, PARD?

I'M SLUGGIN' YOU SO YOU'LL TELL A STRAIGHT STORY! AH!


CARNIE CALAHAN, COLONEL LANE'S BARKER!
DOGGONE! I SURE WAS A-GITTIN' FOND O' THAT THAR MOUSTACHE!


AND I SURE HATE TO SEE IT MUSSED UP LIKE THAT... ESPECIALLY BY THE BEST ADVANCE MAN IN THE BUSINESS! THANKS FOR ASKING FOR THIS, CROOK!

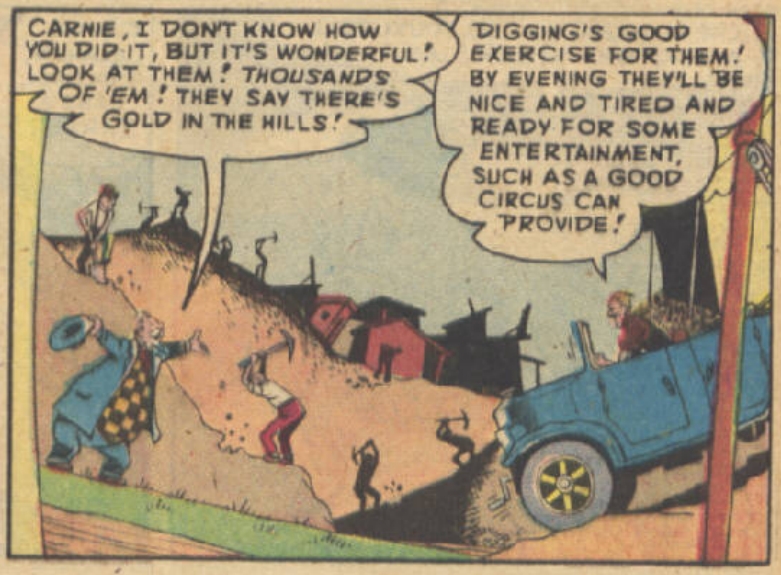

YOUR AIM IS AS BAD AS YOUR IDEAS FOR RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL CIRCUS, CAPTAIN COLIN!

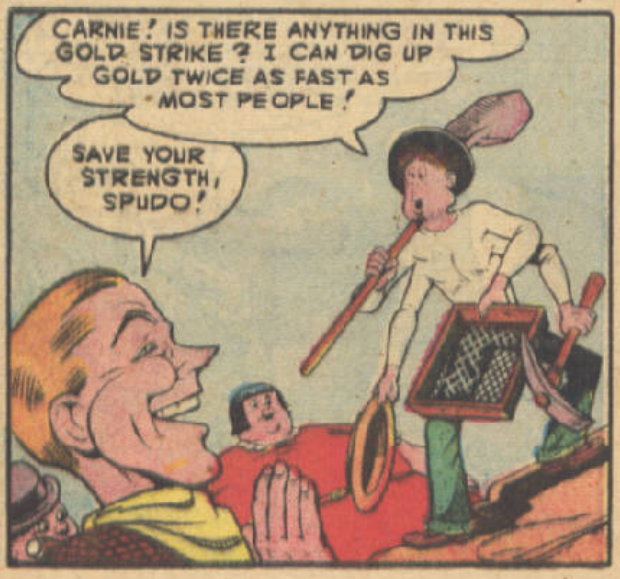
HERE'S HOW IT'S DONE!

SWEET DREAMS! I'VE GOT A DATE, SPIELING TO A MOB!

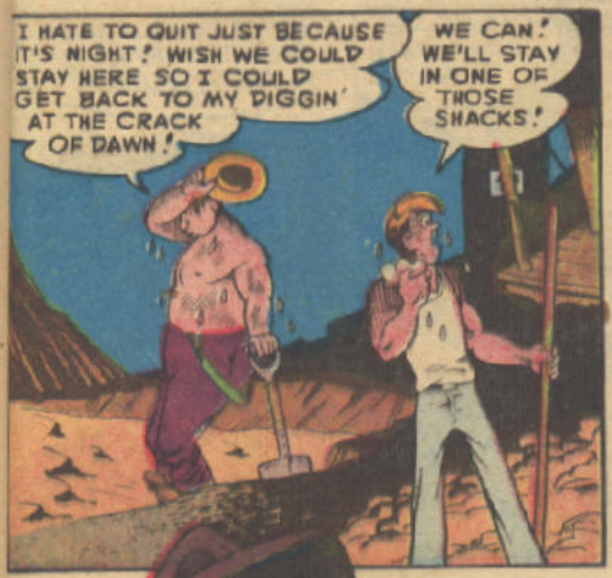
WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! WE CAN TELL EVERYBODY THAT THE GOLD STRIKE IS JUST A HOAX!
THEY'LL NEVER BELIEVE US! YOU CAN'T TALK PEOPLE WHO'VE BEEN BITTEN BY THE GOLD BUG OUT OF LOOKING FOR THEMSELVES!

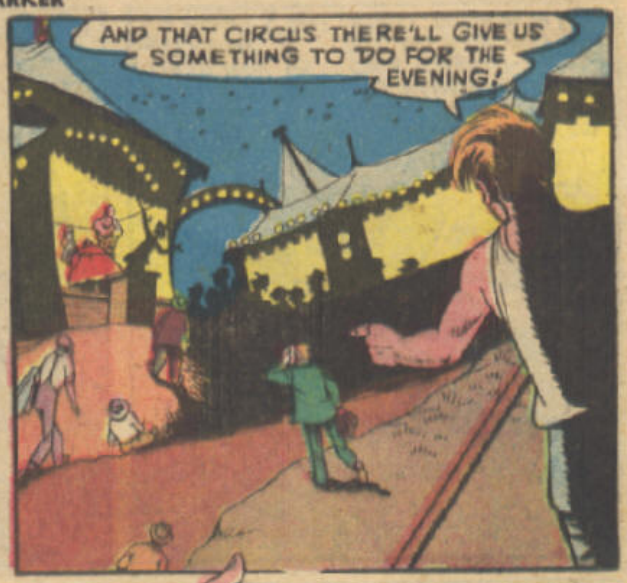
THEN WHAT CAN WE DO?
PLENTY! I'VE GOT AN IDEA THAT'LL STOP CALAHAN AND MAKE THE SUCKERS LEAVE TOMBSTOWN IN A HURRY!


CARNIE, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DID IT, BUT IT'S WONDERFUL! LOOK AT THEM! THOUSANDS OF 'EM! THEY SAY THERE'S GOLD IN THE HILLS!
DIGGING'S GOOD EXERCISE FOR THEM! BY EVENING THEY'LL BE NICE AND TIRED AND READY FOR SOME ENTERTAINMENT, SUCH AS A GOOD CIRCUS CAN PROVIDE!


CARNIE! IS THERE ANYTHING IN THIS GOLD STRIKE? I CAN DIG UP GOLD TWICE AS FAST AS MOST PEOPLE!
SAVE YOUR STRENGTH, SPUDO!

As night approaches....
WHEW! I SURE AM TIRED ... AND NO GOLD YET!
Y'CAN'T DIG IT UP RIGHT AWAY! YOU GOTTA KEEP AT IT!


I HATE TO QUIT JUST BECAUSE IT'S NIGHT! WISH WE COULD STAY HERE SO I COULD GET BACK TO MY DIGGIN' AT THE CRACK OF DAWN!
WE CAN! WE'LL STAY IN ONE OF THOSE SHACKS!


AND THAT CIRCUS THERE'LL GIVE US SOMETHING TO DO FOR THE EVENING!

YES, FOLKS... YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE THIS TIME!
STEP IN AND SEE THE MOST WONDERFUL SHOW ON EARTH!
EVERYBODY GOES TO COLONEL LANE'S MAMMOTH CIRCUS!

I'M GONNA DIG A WHILE LONGER! MAYBE I'LL BE THE FIRST TO STRIKE PAYDIRT!
I DON'T KNOW! I'M TIRED ENOUGH TO QUIT AND GO TO THE CIRCUS WITH THE REST OF THE CROWD!

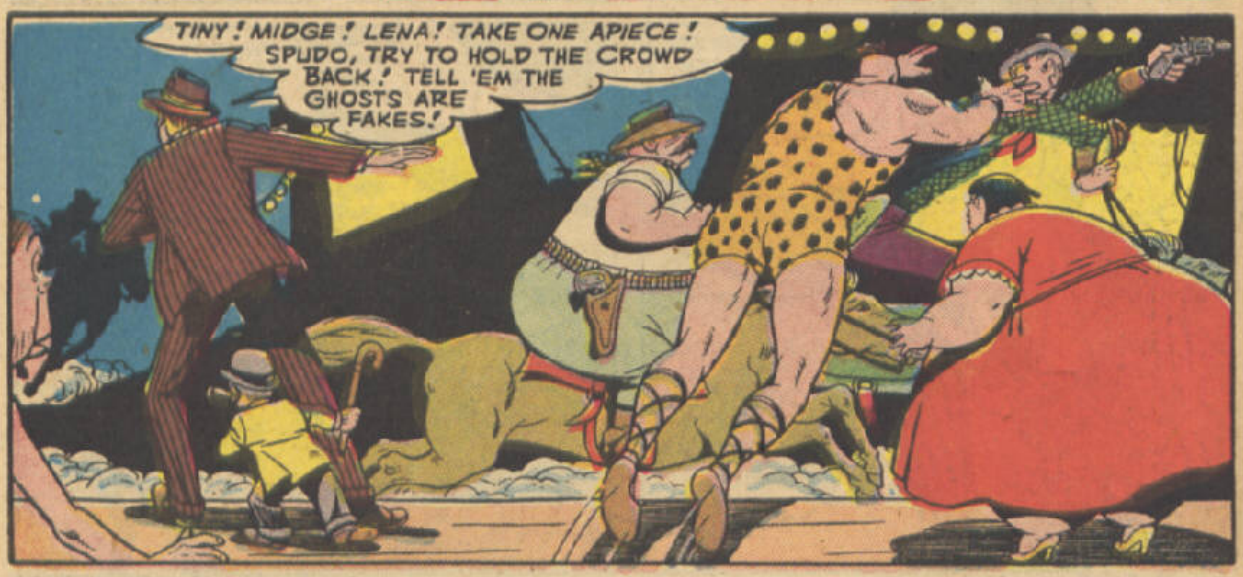
HELP! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES! THIS PLACE IS FULL OF GHOSTS! THEY'RE COMIN' AFTER US!

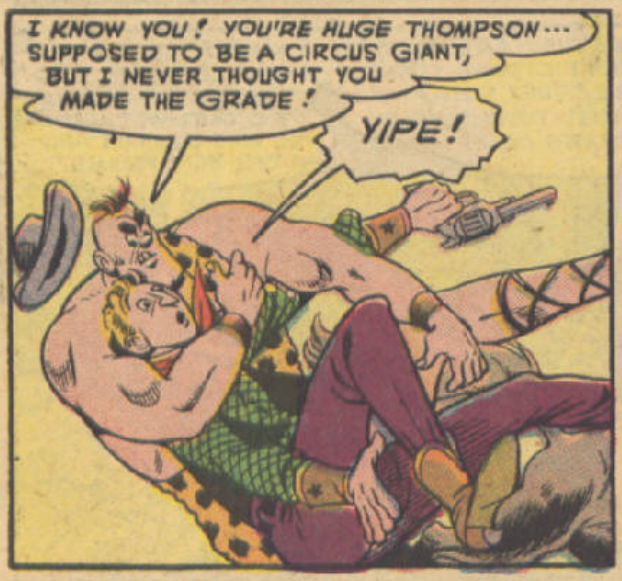
GRAWK! THEY ARE GHOSTS! I'VE SEEN PICTURES O' THEM FELLERS! THEY DIED IN THIS GHOST TOWN SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO!
YAWP! THEY WERE BAD HOMBRES, TOO! THERE'S FAT LARSEN, THE OUTLAW! AND PEE WEE GALTON AND BIG BOY REAMS!

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES! IT'S THE GHOSTS OF THE FORTY-NINERS WHO DIED HERE WITH THEIR BOOTS ON! THEY DON'T WANT INTRUDERS IN THEIR GHOST TOWN!
LOOK! MY OLD MAN USED TO TELL ME ABOUT THOSE FELLERS! THEY WERE KILLERS!

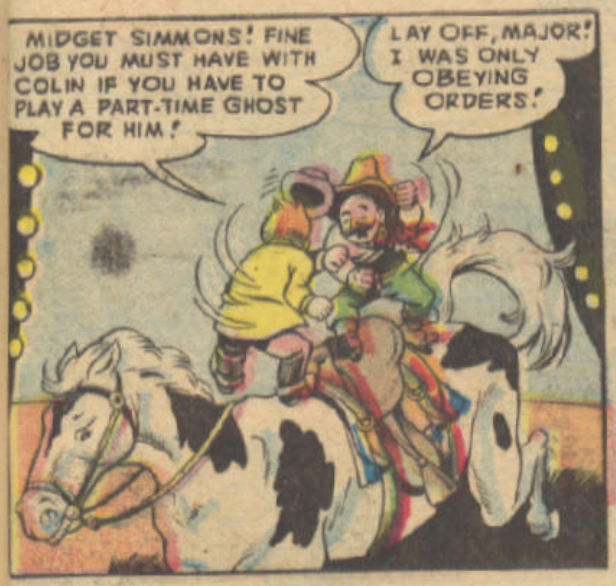
CHARLIE RUCE!
CARNIE, ARE THEY REALLY GHOSTS?

NOT IF CHARLIE RUCE SAYS THEY ARE! HEY, RUBE!


TINY! MIDGE! LENA! TAKE ONE APIECE! SPUDO, TRY TO HOLD THE CROWD BACK! TELL 'EM THE GHOSTS ARE FAKES!


I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE HUGE THOMPSON... SUPPOSED TO BE A CIRCUS GIANT, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT YOU MADE THE GRADE!
YIPE!

NOW I KNOW YOU DON'T!


MIDGET SIMMONS! FINE JOB YOU MUST HAVE WITH COLIN IF YOU HAVE TO PLAY A PART-TIME GHOST FOR HIM!
LAY OFF, MAJOR! I WAS ONLY OBEYING ORDERS!

YOU'D HAVE TO DO ANYTHING TO KEEP A JOB, I GUESS! YOU CERTAINLY WOULDN'T QUALIFY AS A MIDGET IN A GOOD CIRCUS, YOU BIG LUG!

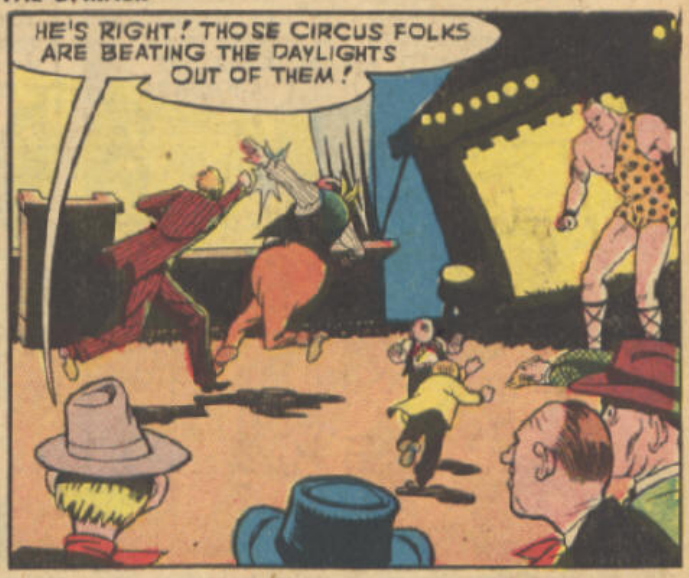
PINKY DAWS! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE WE PLAYED THE SAME CARNIVAL YEARS AGO! IMAGINE MAKING A LIVING SCARING PEOPLE TO DEATH! AND GOODNESS ... YOU'VE LOST SO MUCH WEIGHT!
OW... EASY, LENA! YOU KNOW I CAN'T HIT A LADY!

BEFORE LONG YOU'LL LEARN THAT CHARLIE RUCE'S STUNTS DON'T ALWAYS PAY OFF, CAPTAIN COLIN!
BACK, CALAHAN OR I'LL...

YOU WERE SAYING?
AW-WRRK!

SOMETHING DIDN'T GO ACCORDING TO PLAN!

DON'T RUN AWAY, FOLKS! THOSE AREN'T GHOSTS YOU SEE ... THOSE ARE FAKES! LOOK AT WHAT MY PALS ARE DOING TO THEM!

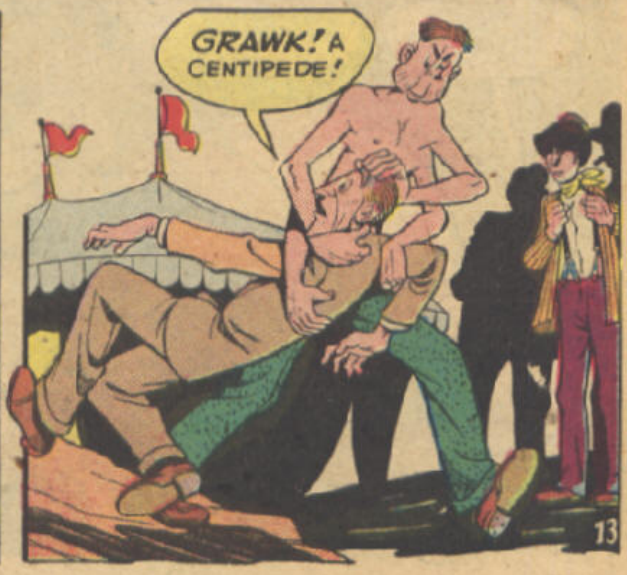

HE'S RIGHT! THOSE CIRCUS FOLKS ARE BEATING THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF THEM!

THIS CIRCUS MUST BE A HUMDINGER WITH FELLERS LIKE THAT IN IT! LET'S GO BACK!
GOING BACK'S ALL RIGHT FOR THEM! BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME IT'S TIME FOR ME TO MAKE TRACKS OUT OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD!

SPUDO, GET THAT GUY! THAT'S CHARLIE RUCE!

IT'LL BE A PLEASURE!

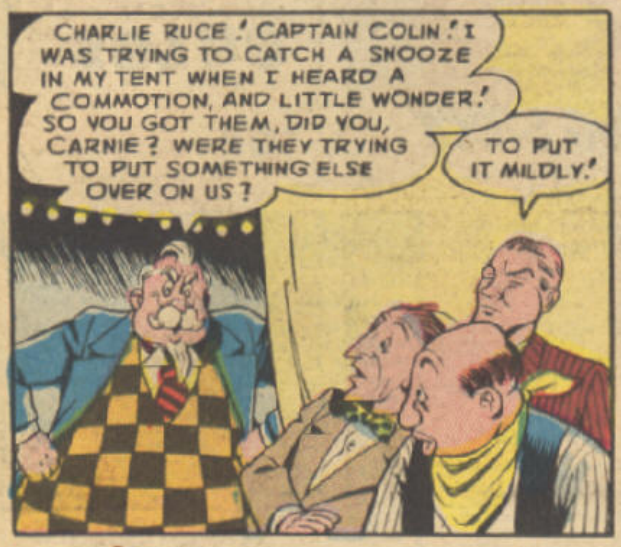
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME!

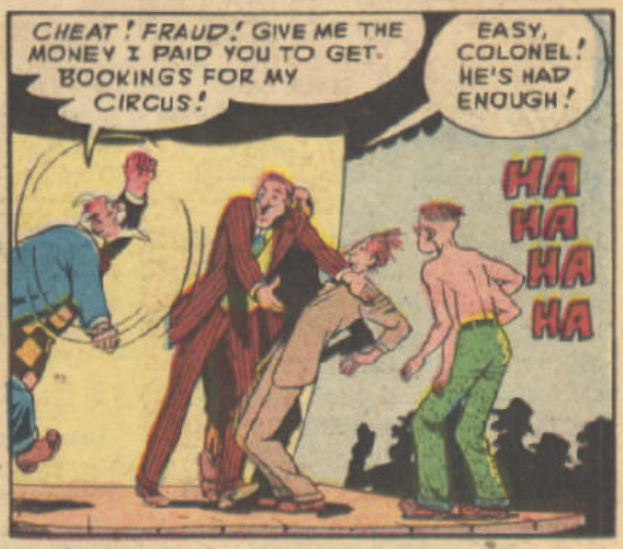

GRAWK! A CENTIPEDE!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS PHONY PULLED A FAST ONE ON YOU! THERE'S NO GOLD HERE!

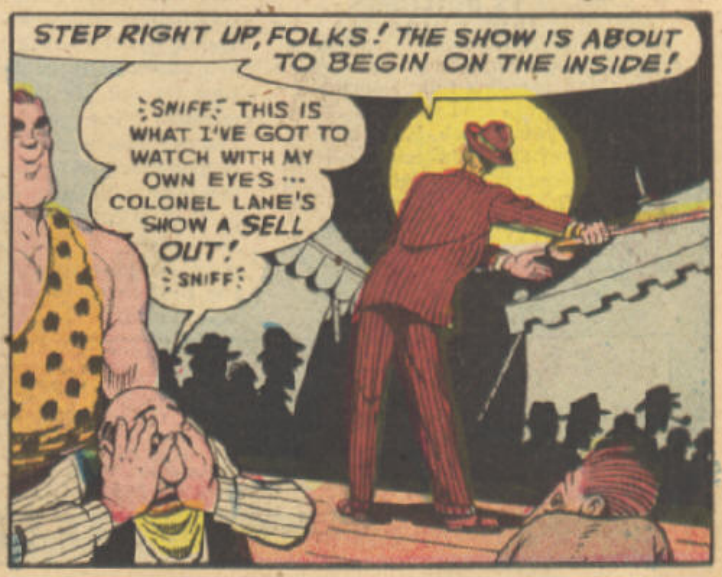
IS THAT TRUE, MISTER?
YES! BUT IF I HADN'T GOT YOU TO COME HERE, YOU'D BE MISSING THE GREATEST CIRCUS IN THE WORLD! AND ONLY BECAUSE THIS CONNIVER FIXED IT SO THAT WE COULDN'T PLAY IN YOUR TOWN!

AFTER ALL, WHAT'S GOLD COMPARED TO A GOOD CIRCUS?
BY GUM; IF THE FELLERS HE HAS WITH HIM ARE A SAMPLE OF THE PERFORMERS IN HIS CIRCUS, WE DON'T WANT ANY PART OF CAPTAIN COLIN'S SHOW!


CHARLIE RUCE! CAPTAIN COLIN! I WAS TRYING TO CATCH A SNOOZE IN MY TENT WHEN I HEARD A COMMOTION, AND LITTLE WONDER! SO YOU GOT THEM, DID YOU, CARNIE? WERE THEY TRYING TO PUT SOMETHING ELSE OVER ON US?
TO PUT IT MILDLY!


CHEAT! FRAUD! GIVE ME THE MONEY I PAID YOU TO GET BOOKINGS FOR MY CIRCUS!
EASY, COLONEL! HE'S HAD ENOUGH!
HA HA HA HA

BESIDES, YOU WOULDN'T HIT THE BEST ADVANCE MAN IN THE BUSINESS, WOULD YOU?
HARUMPH! ER... WELL... ANYBODY CAN MAKE A MISTAKE!


STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS! THE SHOW IS ABOUT TO BEGIN ON THE INSIDE!
SNIFF! THIS IS WHAT I'VE GOT TO WATCH WITH MY OWN EYES... COLONEL LANE'S SHOW A SELL OUT! SNIFF!